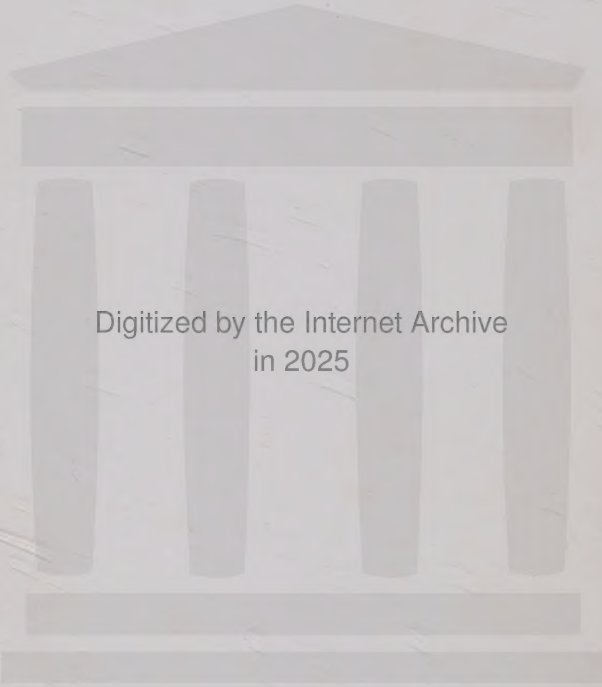




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LETTERS OF
HORACE WALPOLE

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.

PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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Horace Walpole
from a plaque in Battersea enamel.

Walker & Cocherell Ph. Sc.

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THE LETTERS
OF
HORACE WALPOLE

FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED
AND EDITED WITH NOTES AND INDICES

BY

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES
WITH PORTRAITS AND FACSIMILES

VOL. IX: 1774—1776

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CONTENTS OF VOL. IX

	PAGES
LIST OF PORTRAITS	vi
LIST OF LETTERS IN VOLUME IX	vii-xii
LETTERS 1540-1742	1-454

LIST OF PORTRAITS

HORACE WALPOLE	<i>Frontispiece</i>
<i>From plaque in Battersea enamel in South Kensington Museum.</i>	
FACSIMILE OF LETTER OF HORACE WALPOLE TO MADAME DU DEFFAND	<i>To face p. 130</i>
REV. WILLIAM MASON	,, 178
<i>From painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in possession of Pembroke College, Cambridge.</i>	
ELIZABETH BERKELEY, BARONESS CRAVEN	,, 331
<i>From painting by G. Romney in National Portrait Gallery.</i>	
ROBERT CLIVE, FIRST BARON CLIVE	,, 400
<i>From painting by N. Dance in National Portrait Gallery.</i>	

LIST OF LETTERS IN VOL. IX

T			C
		1774.	
1540	May 28, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1434
1541	June 8, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1435
1542	June 14, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1437
1543†	June 19, 1774. . .	Sir William Hamilton.	
1544	June 23, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1439
1545	July 10, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1440
1546	July 19, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1441
1547	July 21, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1438
1548	July 30, 1774 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1442
1549	Aug. 3, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1443
1550	Aug. 10, 1774. . .	George Augustus Selwyn .	1444
1551	Aug. 11, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1445
1552	Aug. 15, 1774. . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1446
1553	Aug. 18, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1447
1554	Aug. 23, 1774. . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1448
1555	Aug. 23, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1449
1556	Sept. 2, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1450
1557	Sept. 7, 1774 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1451
1558	Sept. 14, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1452
1559	Sept. 16, 1774. . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1453
1560†	Sept. 17, 1774. . .	John Fenn.	
1561†	Sept. 18, 1774. . .	Sir Horace Mann.	
1562	Sept. 26, 1774. . .	John Craufurd	1455
1563	Sept. 27, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1456
1564	Sept. 28, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1457
1565	Oct. 6, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1458
1566	Oct. 11, 1774 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1459
1567	[Oct. 1774] . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1454
1568	Oct. 15, 1774 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1460
1569	Oct. 16, 1774 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1461
1570	Oct. 22, 1774 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1462
1571	Oct. 27, 1774 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1463
1572	Oct. 29, 1774 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1464
1573	Nov. 7, 1774 . . .	Countess of Ailesbury . .	1465

† Now printed for the first time.

T		C
1574	Nov. 11, 1774. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1466
1575	Nov. 11, 1774. . .	Earl of Strafford. . . 1467
1576	Nov. 11, 1774. . .	Isaac Reed . . . 2662
1577	Nov. 12, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1468
1578	Nov. 14, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1469
1579	Nov. 23, 1774. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1470
1580	Nov. 24, 1774. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1471
1581	Nov. 27, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1472
1582	Dec. 15, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1473
1583†	Dec. 23, 1774. . .	Sir Horace Mann.
1584	Dec. 26, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1474
1585	[Dec. 1774] . . .	George Augustus Selwyn.
1586†	Ce 26 Déc. 1774. . .	Marquise du Deffand.
1587	Dec. 31, 1774. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1475

1775.

1588	Jan. 1, 1775 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1476
1589	Jan. 2, 1775 . . .	John Craufurd . . . 1477
1590†	Ce 4 Janv. 1775 . .	Marquise du Deffand.
1591	Jan. 9, 1775 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1478
1592	Jan. 9, 1775 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1479
1593	Jan. 12, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1480
1594†	Jan. 12, 1775. . .	Earl of Hardwicke.
1595†	Ce 13 Janv. 1775 . .	Marquise du Deffand.
1596	Jan. 15, 1775. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway and Countess of Ailesbury. 1481
1597	Jan. 15, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1482
1598	Jan. 17, 1775. . .	Duke of Gloucester . . . 1483
1599†	Ce 19 Janv. 1775. .	Marquise du Deffand.
1600	Jan. 21, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . {1484 1488
1601	Jan. 22, 1775. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1485
1602	Jan. 24, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1486
1603	Jan. 25, 1775. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1487
1604†	Ce 27 Janv. 1775. .	Marquise du Deffand.
1605†	Ce 31 Janv. 1775. .	Marquise du Deffand.
1606	Feb. 1, 1775 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1489
1607	Feb. 15, 1775. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1490
1608	Feb. 18, 1775. . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1491
1609	Feb. 28, 1775. . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1492
1610	March 7, 1775 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1493

† Now printed for the first time.

T	C
1611 March 20, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1494
1612 April 3, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1495
1613 April 11, 1775 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1496
1614 April 14, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1497
1615 April 17, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . {1498 1499
1616 April 25, 1775 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1500
1617 May 7, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1501
1618 May 7, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1502
1619 May 17, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1503
1620 May 27, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1504
1621 June 5, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1505
1622 June 5, 1775 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1506
1623 June 12 [1775] . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1436
1624 June 14, 1775 . .	Viscount Nuneham . . . 1507
1625 June 23, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1508
1626 July 6, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1509
1627 July 7, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1510
1628 July 9, 1775 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1511
1629 July 10, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1512
1630 July 18, 1775 . .	Viscount Nuneham . . . 1513
1631 July 23, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1514
1632 Aug. 3, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1515
1633 Aug. 3, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1516
1634 Aug. 7, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1517
1635 Aug. 9, 1775 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1518
1636 Aug. 10, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . {1519 1520
1637 Aug. 17, 1775 . .	Countess of Ailesbury . . . 1521
1638 Aug. 18, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1522
1639 Aug. 20, 1775 . .	Countess of Ailesbury . . . 1523
1640 Aug. 23 [1775] . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1524
1641 Sept. 6, 1775 . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1525
1642 Sept. 7, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1526
1643 Sept. 8, 1775 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1527
1644 [Sept. 1775] . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1531
1645 Sept. 12, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . {1528 1529
1646 Sept. 16, 1775 . .	George Augustus Selwyn . . 1530
1647 Oct. 3, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1532
1648 Oct. 6, 1775 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1533
1649 Oct. 10, 1775 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1534
1650 Oct. 17, 1775 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1535

T		C
1651	Oct. 21, 1775 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1536
1652	Oct. 23, 1775 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1537
1653	Oct. 25, 1775 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1538
1654	Oct. 27, 1775 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1539
1655	Oct. 27, 1775 . . .	Duke of Richmond . . . 1540
1656	Oct. 28, 1775 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1541
1657	Nov. 9, 1775 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1542
1658	Nov. 14, 1775. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1543
1659	Nov. 18, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1544
1660	Nov. 23, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1545
1661	Nov. 27, 1775. . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1546
1662	Dec. 4, 1775 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1547
1663	Dec. 8, 1775 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1548
1664	Dec. 10, 1775. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1549
1665	Dec. 11, 1775. . .	Countess of Ailesbury . . 1550
1666	Dec. 14, 1775. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1551
1667†	Dec. 14, 1775. . .	Rev. Thomas Percy.
1668	Dec. 17, 1775. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1552
1669	Dec. 19, 1775. . .	Thomas Astle . . . 1553
1670	Dec. 20, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1554
1671	Dec. 21, 1775. . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1555
1672	Dec. 25, 1775. . .	John Robinson.
1673	Dec. 26, 1775. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1556
1674	Dec. 27, 1775. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1557
1675†	Dec. 1775 . . .	Sir Horace Mann.

1776.

1676	Jan. 26, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1558
1677	Jan. 28, 1776. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1559
1678	[Feb. 1776] . . .	Edward Gibbon. . . . 1560
1679	Feb. 6 [1776]. . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1561
1680	Feb. 14, 1776 . . .	Edward Gibbon. . . . 1562
1681	Feb. 15, 1776. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1563
1682	Feb. 18, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1564
1683	Feb. 29, 1776. . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1565
1684	March 1, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1566
1685	March 11, 1776 . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1567
1686	March 22, 1776 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1568
1687	April 4, 1776. . .	Dr. Gem 1569
1688	April 8, 1776. . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1570
1689	[April 1776] . . .	Rev. William Mason . . 1571

† Now printed for the first time.

T	C
1690 April 16, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1572
1691 April 17, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1573
1692 April 20, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1574
1693 April 21, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1575
1694 April 23, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1576
1695 April 24, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1577
1696 May 4, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1579
1697 May 14, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1580
1698 May 17, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1581
1699 May 20, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1582
1700 May 27, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1583
1701 [May 1776] . . .	Viscount Nuneham . . . 1584
1702 June 1, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1585
1703 June 5, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1586
1704 June 11, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1587
1705 June 20, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1588
1706 Ce 23 Juin 1776 . . .	Count Schuwalof.
1707 June 25, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1589
1708 June 30, 1776 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1590
1709 July 10, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1591
1710 July 13, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1592
1711 July 16, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1593
1712 July 17, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1594
1713 July 23, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1595
1714 July 24, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1596
1715 Aug. 4, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1597
1716 Aug. 11, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1598
1717 Aug. 16, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1599
1718 Aug. 19, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1600
1719 Aug. 20, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1601
1720 Aug. 22, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1602
1721 Sept. 9, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1603
1722 Sept. 17, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1604
1723 Sept. 20, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1605
1724 Sept. 22, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1606
1725 Oct. 8, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Mason . . . 1607
1726 Oct. 9, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1608
1727 Oct. 13, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1609
1728 Oct. 13, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1610
1729 Thursday, [Oct.] 31, [1776]	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1611
1730 Nov. 1, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1612
1731 Nov. 2, 1776 . . .	Earl of Strafford . . . 1613

T	C
1732 [Nov. 1776] . . .	Rev. William Mason Part of 1604
1733 Nov. 13, 1776. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1614
1734 Nov. 24, 1776. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1615
1735 Dec. 1, 1776 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1616
1736 Dec. 3, 1776 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1617
1737 Dec. 9, 1776 . . .	George Allan.
1738 Dec. 9, 1776 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1618
1739 Dec. 17, 1776. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1619
1740 Dec. 20, 1776. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1620
1741 Dec. 23, 1776. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1621
1742† [1776]	Comtesse de Viry.

† Now printed for the first time.

THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

1540. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, May 28, 1774.

NOTHING will be more agreeable to me, dear Sir, than a visit from you in July. I will try and persuade Mr. Granger to meet you; and if you had any such thing as summer in the fens, I would desire you to bring a bag with you. We are almost freezing here in the midst of beautiful verdure, with a profusion of blossoms and flowers: but I keep good fires, and seem to feel warm weather while I look through the window, for the way to ensure summer in England is to have it framed and glazed in a comfortable room.

I shall be still more glad to hear you are settled in your living. Burnham¹ is almost in my neighbourhood, and its being in that of Eton and Windsor will more than console you, I hope, for leaving Ely and Cambridge. Pray let me know the moment you are certain. It would now be a disappointment to me as well as you. You shall be inaugurated in my chapel, which is much more venerable than your parish church, and has the genuine air of antiquity. I bought very little at poor Mr. Bateman's. His nephew disposed of little that was worth house-room, and yet pulled the whole to pieces.

LETTER 1540. —¹ Cole succeeded his half-brother, Dr. Apthorpe, as vicar of Burnham in Buckinghamshire in June 1774.

Mr. Pennant² has published a new tour to Scotland and the Hebrides, and, though he has endeavoured to paint their dismal isles and rocks in glowing colours, they will not be satisfied, for he seems no bigot about Ossian, at least in some passages, and is free in others, which their intolerating spirit will resent. I cannot say the book is very entertaining to me, as it is more a book of rates than of antiquities. The most amusing part was communicated to him by Mr. Banks, who found whole islands that bear nothing but columns, as other places do grass and barley. There is a beautiful cave called Fingal's, which proves that nature loves Gothic architecture.

Mr. Pennant has given a new edition of his former tour with more cuts. Among others is the vulgar head called the Countess of Desmond. I told him I had discovered, and proved past contradiction, that it is Rembrandt's mother; he owned it, and said he would correct it by a note—but he has not. This is a brave way of being an antiquary; as if there could be any merit in giving for genuine what one knows is spurious. He is, indeed, a superficial man, and knows little of history or antiquity—but he has a violent rage for being an author. He set out with ornithology, and a little natural history, and picks up his knowledge as he rides. I have a still lower idea of Mr. Gough; for Mr. Pennant, at least, is very civil. The other is a hog. Mr. Fenn³, another smatterer in antiquity, but a very good sort of man, told me Mr. Gough desired to be introduced to me—but as he has been such a bear to you, he shall not come. The Society of Antiquaries put me in mind of what the old Lord Pembroke said to Anstis the

² Thomas Pennant (1726-1798). He visited Scotland in 1769 and 1772, and published accounts of both tours.

³ John Fenn (1739-1794), knighted

in 1787. He was the first editor of the *Paston Letters*. A series of letters addressed to him by Walpole is printed for the first time in the present edition.

herald: 'Thou silly fellow, thou dost not know thy own silly business.' If they went beyond taste by poking into barbarous ages when there was no taste, one could forgive them—but they catch at the first ugly thing they see, and take it for old, because it is new to them, and then usher it pompously into the world as if they had made a discovery, though they have not yet cleared up a single point that is of the least importance, or that tends to settle any obscure passage in history.

I will not condole with you on having had the gout, since you find it has removed other complaints. Besides, as it begins late, you are never likely to have it severely. I shall be in terrors in two or three months, having had the four last fits periodically and biennially. Indeed, the two last were so long and severe, that my remaining and shattered strength could ill support such.

I must repeat how glad I shall be to have you at Burnham. When people grow old, as you and I do, they should get together. Others do not care for us, but we seem wiser to one another by finding fault with them—not that I am apt to dislike young folks, whom I think everything becomes; but it is a kind of self-defence to live in a body. I dare to say that monks never find out that they grow old fools. Their age gives them authority, and nobody contradicts them. In the world, one cannot help perceiving one is out of fashion. Women play at cards with women of their own standing, and censure others between the deals, and thence conclude themselves Gamaliels. I, who see many young men with better parts than myself, submit with a good grace, or retreat hither to my castle, where I am satisfied with what I have done, and am always in good humour; but I like to have one or two old friends with me—I do not much invite the juvenile, who think my castle and me of equal antiquity, for no wonder, if they

suppose that George I lived in the time of the Crusades. Adieu! my good Sir, and pray let Burnham Wood and Dunsinane be good neighbours.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1541. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 8, 1774.

WE are still in the dark about Louis XVI, and do not know whether he designs to make war on the old ministers, on us, or on the ladies of pleasure. They represent him as covetous, but he has only retrenched some tables at court, and has remitted a great sum to the people. As the blessings of the latter are more desirable than those of the nobility, I am apt to think they are more prevalent too than the maledictions of the latter.

As yet there seem to be no colours hung out by which one can judge. D'Aiguillon, it is thought, will fall, though he is said to have betrayed¹ Madame du Barri, and to have prevented her escape. Were I an absolute monarch, which such a man would make one wish oneself, I would forbid him ever to set his foot in a town where there was a single gentleman, as not fit to breathe where there is one. Old La Vrillière², another wretch, is likely to fall too, unpitied. I wish the Chancellor³ may too, who is a villainous bashaw. Maurepas⁴ does not gain ground. No exiles are recalled. Were the Duc de Choiseul to rise again, I could easily tell what would happen. The Mesdames have had the small-pox, and have escaped, which

LETTER 1541.—¹ This did not prove true. *Walpole.*

² Mons. de St. Florentine, Secretary of State, and then Duc de la Vrillière. *Walpole.*

³ Maupeou. *Walpole.*

⁴ The Comte de Maurepas was disgraced in 1749. Louis XVI recalled him to court, and made him Chef du Conseil des Finances.

makes one glad after such meritorious behaviour,—meritorious, but which it was cruel not to restrain.

Indeed, we want no foreign war: the scene in America grows serious. We have this week heard that New York has taken as warm a part as Boston against the teas. The House of Commons sits very late every day, though at this season, on a bill for settling Canada; and though it is said the Parliament will rise next week, I should think the prorogation would be very short, till the news from America are better. Lord Chatham has appeared in the House of Lords, but pleased nobody but Lord Temple, with whom he is again strictly united, which you may mention to his sister⁵. This is the sum of public history, at least that I know, who have been very little in town this month.

The Duke of Devonshire and Lady Georgiana Spencer were married on Sunday; and this month Lord Stanley marries Lady Betty Hamilton⁶. He gives her a most splendid entertainment to-morrow at his villa⁷ in Surrey, and calls it a *fête champêtre*. It will cost five thousand pounds. Everybody is to go in masquerade, but not in mask. He has bought all the orange-trees round London, and the haycocks, I suppose, are to be made of straw-coloured satin.

Lady Mary Coke is arrived. She has not been false to the Duke of York's bed, but was so frail as to cuckold his vault; for she went down into that at St. Denis with Louis Quatorze, as she did into that at Westminster when the Princess died. Her Grace of Kingston, though a phenomenon, is no original; the purchase of Sixtus Quintus's

⁵ Miss Anne Pitt, then in Florence.

⁶ Lady Elizabeth Hamilton (d. 1797), daughter of sixth Duke of Hamilton; m. (June 23, 1774) Edward

Smith-Stanley, Lord Stanley, who succeeded his grandfather as twelfth Earl of Derby in 1776.

⁷ The Oaks, Epsom.

villa⁸ seems to be an imitation of that stroller, Queen Christina.

My chapel is finished, and Donatello's St. John is enshrined in it. In truth, every chamber at Strawberry is enriched with your presents, which are its most valuable ornaments;—the Caligula, the Castiglione, Bianca Capello, Benvenuto Cellini's casket, the Florentine box. Take notice, I have not an inch of space left, neither in my house nor my gratitude. I have even forgotten some, as the intaglia of an Apollo, and perhaps twenty things more.

I am sorry to tell Mrs. Pitt that her house at Knightsbridge has been led astray, the moment she turned her back: see what it is to live in a bad neighbourhood! *Pittsburgh*, the Temple of Vesta, is as naughty as Villa Kingstoniana; not that Dr. Elliot's pretty wife⁹ has married another husband in his lifetime; but she has eloped with my Lord Valentia¹⁰, who has another wife and some half-dozen children. The sages of Doctors' Commons are to be applied to. I am much obliged to Mrs. Pitt for forcing you to tell me you are safe from your verdigris. It would have been shocking to have heard it, and waited for the post. Her ball she described to you was very like the cloth of a thousand yards, on which were painted all the kings and queens in the universe, and which cloth was lapped up in the kernel of a nut. You are very happy in having such company; it will indemnify you for forty dozen of bears and bear-leaders, that you

⁸ Then known as the Villa Negroni.

⁹ Miss Dalrymple, wife of Sir John Elliot, the physician, from whom she was divorced for many adulteries, and became a celebrated courtesan, known by the name of Dolly the Tall. Sir J. Elliot had bought Mrs. Anne Pitt's villa at Knightsbridge, where the Duchess of Kingston and

the Duke of Rutland's mistress had villas also. *Walpole*.—Mrs. Elliot was afterwards known as Mme. de St. Alban.

¹⁰ Arthur Annesley (1744–1816), eighth Viscount Valentia, created Earl of Mountnorris in 1798; m. (1767) Hon. Lucy Fortescue Lyttelton (d. 1783), only daughter of first Baron Lyttelton.

have been endeavouring for these thirty years to tame, and the latter half of which never are licked into form. Adieu!

P.S. I am reading Montaigne's *Travels*, which have lately been found; there is little in them but the baths and medicines he took, and what he had everywhere for dinner. He was in Italy in 1580, and the only thing that has struck me in the first volume was his seeing Bianca Capello at dinner. He describes her very like your—my picture. She sat above the Duke, and her brother and his wife dined with them, and the Cardinal Ferdinand¹¹. Montaigne says the houses in Italy at that time had no glass windows. His editor, who is a silly fellow, says Pius V obliged Cosimo the Great to marry his mistress Camilla Martelli¹². I never heard this anecdote; is it true? Pray ask Mrs. Pitt if Madame Griffoni, though thirteen years younger, preserves any remains of beauty, like the Duchess of Queensberry. I take my Signora to be full threescore.

11th.

I had forgotten to send my letter to town, and so can answer one I have this instant received from you. I am more sorry for your disappointment in losing your new friend¹³ than surprised. There is a strange oddness, that at times has been more than oddness; in short, I do not know whether I am quite sorry; it is better to have parted in violent friendship than the contrary.

The Duc d'Aiguillon is certainly out of place, and is succeeded by M. de Vergennes, Ambassador at Stockholm, of whom I know nothing; M. de Mui¹⁴ has the *département*

¹¹ Cardinal Ferdinand de' Medici (1549–1609), afterwards Grand Duke of Tuscany as Ferdinand I.

¹² Cosimo I did marry Camilla Martelli. *Walpole*.

¹³ Mrs. Anne Pitt. *Walpole*.

¹⁴ Louis Nicolas Victor de Félix (1711–1775), Comte du Mui; Maréchal de France, 1775.

ment de la Guerre. The young King seems in no hurry. There is a notion that he does not love the English. I don't know where he will find the minister that does; but if the Queen has influence, and her brother¹⁵ has any over her, we shall not have a war—from thence: I will not answer for Spain.

If Lady O. asks you any questions, pray only say you believe I am here, and that as her son is in the country on his side, you imagine we are not much together. I do not desire to give her reasons for quarrelling with him again.

1542. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1774.

VIRGIN MARY! offended at you, Madam! I have crossed myself forty times since I read the impious words, never to be pronounced by human lips,—nay, and to utter them, when I am seemingly to blame,—yet, believe me, my silence is not owing to negligence, or to that most wicked of all sins, inconstancy. I have thought on you waking or sleeping, whenever I have thought at all, from the moment I saw you last; and if there was an echo in the neighbourhood besides Mr. Cambridge, I should have made it repeat your Ladyship's name, till the parish should have presented it for a nuisance. I have begun twenty letters, but the naked truth is, I found I had absolutely nothing to say. You yourself owned, Madam, that I am grown quite lifeless, and it is very true. I am none of your Glastonbury thorns that blow at Christmas. I am a remnant of the last age, and have nothing to do with the present. I am an exile from the sunbeams of Drawing-rooms; I have quitted the gay scenes of Parliament and the Antiquarian Society; I am not of Almack's; I don't understand horse-races;

¹⁵ The Emperor Joseph II, brother of Queen Marie Antoinette.

I never go to reviews ; what can I have to talk of ? I go to no *fêtes champêtres*, what can I have to think of ? I know nothing but about myself, and about myself I know nothing. I have scarce been in town since I saw you, have scarce seen anybody here, and don't remember a tittle but having scolded my gardener twice, which, indeed, would be as important an article as any in Montaigne's *Travels*, which I have been reading, and if I was tired of his *Essays*, what must one be of these ! What signifies what a man thought, who never thought of anything but himself ; and what signifies what a man did, who never did anything ?

I hear nothing from France, but that M. d'Aiguillon has given up the Seals. Lady Mary Coke is arrived, but as she never condescends to level her telescope but at the fixed stars, she certainly knows nothing of the meteors of the day, and therefore I shall not expect much intelligence from her.

Mr. Anstey, who ought to have shot himself the moment he had finished the *Bath Guide*, has published the most complete piece of stupidity I ever read. It is a satire on a parson who writes against him in the newspapers, and cannot, it is impossible, have written worse than Anstey himself. The latter has been enrolled in Mr. Miller's Parnassus at Bath, and is quite raving mad that his *bouts rimés* are not admired. What shall we come to ? I am afraid of opening a new book. The reigning dullness is so profound, that it is not even ridiculous.

Thank Heaven the age is as dull as I am ! Pray tell me, Madam, some of Lady Anne's *bons mots* to enliven me a little. I am expecting Lords Ashburnham, March, Digby, Williams, and George Selwyn.

N.B. I shall not ask for any of the Fagnanina's¹ sayings. It is a dinner in honour of Lord Ashburnham, who pro-

LETTER 1542.—¹ Maria Fagniani, who was adopted by Selwyn.

cured for me the window of my chapel, which is just finished and divine, and ready against the Catholic religion is quite restored. Miss Aikin² has been here this morning (she is just married); she desired to see the Castle of Otranto; I let her see all the antiquities of it.

1543. TO SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

Strawberry Hill, June 19, 1774.

FOR fear of troubling you, dear Sir, with two letters instead of one, I waited for the arrival of the shields¹ before I thanked for them—but it put my gratitude to pain, for I did not receive them till the day before yesterday. Now they are come, it will, which is very selfish, double my gratitude, for they are fine and most charming—nay, almost in too good taste, not to put my Gothic house to shame—I wish the Medusas could turn it to stone! In short, I am exceedingly obliged to you; but though I have spared you one letter of my own, it will cost you another of yours, for you must tell me more about them. The two that are painted are in the great style of the best age; and by the Earl of Surry's shield in the Duke of Norfolk's possession, which is in the same manner as to the form and disposition, though not so bold, I should conclude they are by Polidore, or of that school. Pray satisfy me, and of the pedigree of the other too, which by the battlements on the buildings my house pretends is of its own family.

² Anna Letitia (1743–1825), daughter of Dr. John Aikin; m. (1774) Rev. Rochemont Barbauld. She was the author of the *Hymns in Prose for Children*.

LETTER 1543.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. John W. Ford.

¹ 'Two shields of leather, for tournaments, painted by Polidore; one has the head of Medusa, the

other of Perseus: on the insides are battles in gold. They came out of the collection of Commendatore Vittoria at Naples, and were sent to Mr. W. by Sir W. Hamilton, with a third of iron, representing the story of Curtius, but certainly not antique, as there is a cannon and an embattled tower at a distance.' (*Description of Strawberry Hill*.)

I am going to hang them by the beautiful armour of Francis I, and they will certainly make me dream of another Castle of Otranto, or at least of a tournament more superb than Lord Stanley's *fête champêtre*, though the latter cost half a million. Indeed, if gratitude was apt to colour one's dreams, I have so many monuments of your kindness and friendship, that my house and garden would make my sleep as agreeable as my waking hours. I should write another *Gerusalemme* for Eleanora d'Este², and pray for you in my new chapel, which is just finished, and where the shrine appears more gorgeous than the spoils

Of Ormus and of Ind.

I do not mean new Claremont, which is not half so magnificent. You will not expect English news at this time of year. We have none but what we import from France, where the new King and his brothers were to be inoculated yesterday. His Majesty is so economic that he will not give *fêtes champêtres*. The French, who did not intend to like, adore him; and the Queen, who is too much the *Virgin Mary*, has quite dethroned the latter in their idolatry. The Duc d'Aiguillon is removed, which delights almost everybody, and the Duc de Choiseul has been at Versailles, which pleases almost as many—though not us, for we have no mind to a war.

General Conway is gone a tour of armies, because he has not seen enough of them. Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer are to fetch him from Paris in October.

The Duke of Devonshire is married; Lord Stanley and Lady Betty Hamilton are to be in July. Some wedlocks are breaking too: Lord Valentia has preferred Dr. Elliot's

² A marble bas-relief, inscribed *Dia Helianora*, and representing the Princess with whom Tasso was in love, was presented to Horace Wal-

pole by Sir William Hamilton. It was placed in the cloister at Strawberry Hill.

pretty wife to his own plain one ; but I do not find that there was much preference on her side, but rather on the Doctor's, for he has selected Lord Valentia from several other lords and gentlemen who have been equally kind to the fair one.

We have the most delightful of all summers—fruits, flowers, corn, grass, leaves—in short, though Judæa flowed with milk and honey, I do not believe it was much richer than the present face of England. I know but one richer spot, which is Almack's, where a thousand meadows and cornfields are staked at every throw, and as many villages lost as in the earthquake that overwhelmed Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Pray tell Lady Hamilton I heard a new instrument yesterday, which transported me, though I have not the most musical ears in the world. It is a copulation of a harpsichord and a violin ; one hand strikes the keys and the other draws the bow ; the sounds are prolonged, and it is the softest and most touching melody I ever heard. The instrument is so small it stands on a table and is called a Celestinette³. St. Cecilia or Lady Hamilton would draw all the angels out of heaven with it, or immediately be appointed organists there.

Adieu ! dear Sir—*shield* me from any more presents. Consider how you have loaded me, and though gratitude is seldom mortal, I cannot bear so many obligations. I do not know how to be enough

Your very thankful

Humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

³ It was invented by Mason the poet.

1544. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 23, 1774.

I HAVE nothing to say—which is the best reason in the world for writing; for one must have a great regard for anybody one writes to, when one begins a letter neither on ceremony nor business. You are seeing armies¹, who are always in fine order and great spirits when they are in cold blood: I am sorry you thought it worth while to realize what I should have thought you could have seen in your mind's eye. However, I hope you will be amused and pleased with viewing heroes, both in their autumn and their bud. Vienna will be a new sight; so will the Austrian eagle and its two heads². I should like *seeing*, too, if any fairy would present me with a chest that would fly up into the air by touching a peg, and transport me whither I pleased in an instant: but roads, and inns, and dirt are terrible drawbacks on my curiosity. I grow so old, or so indolent, that I scarce stir from hence; and the dread of the gout makes me almost as much a prisoner, as a fit of it. News I know none, if there is any. The papers tell me the City was to present a petition to the King against the Quebec Bill³ yesterday; and I suppose they will tell me to-morrow whether it was presented. The

LETTER 1544.—¹ Mr. Conway was now on a tour of military curiosity through Flanders, Germany, Prussia, and part of Hungary. *Walpole*.

² The Empress-Queen Maria Theresa and her son the Emperor Joseph, who was joint-regent of her hereditary states.

³ 'The principal objects of the Quebec Bill were to ascertain the limits of that province, which were extended far beyond what had been settled as such by the King's proclamation of 1763. To form a legislative council for all the affairs of

that province, except taxation, which council should be appointed by the crown, the office to be held during pleasure; and his Majesty's Canadian Roman Catholic subjects were entitled to a place in it. To establish the French laws, and a trial without jury, in civil cases, and the English laws, with a trial by jury, in criminal. To secure to the Roman Catholic clergy, except the Regulars, the legal enjoyment of their estates, and of their tithes from all who are of their own religion.' (*Ann. Reg.* 1774, p. 75.)

King's Speech tells me there has nothing happened between the Russians and the Turks. Lady Barrymore told me t'other day that nothing was to happen between her and Lord Egremont. I am as well satisfied with these negatives as I should have been with the contrary. I am much more interested about the rain, for it destroys all my roses and orange-flowers, of which I have exuberance; and my hay is cut, and cannot be made. However, it is delightful to have no other distresses. When I compare my present tranquillity and indifference with all I suffered last year⁴, I am thankful for my happiness, and enjoy it—unless the bell rings at the gate early in the morning—and then I tremble, and think it an express from Norfolk.

It is unfortunate, that when one has nothing to talk of but oneself, one should have nothing to say of oneself. It is shameful, too, to send such a scrap by the post. I think I shall reserve it till Tuesday. If I have then nothing to add, as is probable, you must content yourself with my good intentions, as you, I hope, will with this speculative campaign. Pray, for the future, remain at home, and build bridges: I wish you were here to expedite ours to Richmond, which they tell me will not be passable these two years. I have done looking so forward. Adieu!

1545. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1774.

THE month is come round, and I have, besides, a letter of yours to answer; and yet if I was not as regular as a husband or a merchant in paying my just dues, I think I should not perform the function, for I certainly have no natural call to it at present. Nothing in yours requires a response, and I have nothing new to tell you. Yet, if

⁴ During the illness of his nephew, Lord Orford. *Walpole*.

one once breaks in upon punctuality, adieu to it! I will not give out, after a perseverance of three-and-thirty years; and so far I will not resemble a husband.

The whole blood royal of France is recovered from the small-pox. Both Choiseul and Broglio are recalled, and I have some idea that even the old Parliament will be so. The King is adored, and a most beautiful compliment has been paid to him: somebody wrote under the statue of Henri Quatre, *Resurrexit*.

Lord Holland is at last dead, and Lady Holland is at the point of death. His sons would still be in good circumstances, if they were not *his* sons; but he had so totally spoiled the two eldest, that they would think themselves bigots if they were to have common sense. The prevailing style is not to reform, though Lord Lyttelton pretends to have set the example. Gaming, for the last month, has exceeded its own outdoings, though the town is very empty. It will be quite so to-morrow, for Newmarket begins, or rather the youth adjourn thither. After that they will have two or three months of repose; but if they are not severely blooded and blistered, there will be no alteration. Their pleasures are no more entertaining to others than delightful to themselves; one is tired of asking every day who has won or lost? and even the portentous sums they lose cease to make impression. One of them has committed a murder, and intends to repeat it. He betted 1,500*l.* that a man could live twelve hours under water; hired a desperate fellow, sunk him in a ship, by way of experiment, and both ship and man have not appeared since. Another man and ship are to be tried for their lives, instead of Mr. Blake, the assassin.

Christina, Duchess of Kingston, is arrived, in a great fright, I believe, for the Duke's nephews are going to prove her first marriage, and hope to set the will aside. It is

a pity her friendship with the Pope had not begun earlier ; he might have given her a dispensation. If she loses her cause, the best thing he can do will be to give her the veil.

I am sorry all Europe will not furnish me with another paragraph. Africa is, indeed, coming into fashion. There is just returned a Mr. Bruce¹, who has lived three years in the court of Abyssinia, and breakfasted every morning with the Maids of Honour on live oxen. Otaheite and Mr. Banks are quite forgotten ; but Mr. Blake², I suppose, will order a live sheep for supper at Almack's, and ask whom he shall help to a piece of the shoulder. Oh yes ; we shall have negro butchers, and French cooks will be laid aside. My Lady Townshend, after the Rebellion, said everybody was so bloodthirsty, that she did not dare to dine abroad, for fear of meeting with a rebel-pie—now one shall be asked to come and eat a bit of raw mutton. In truth, I do think we are ripe for any extravagance. I am not wise enough to wish the world reasonable—I only desire to have follies that are amusing, and am sorry Cervantes laughed chivalry out of fashion. Adieu !

1546. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, July 19, 1774.

I SEND you by the Fraser-Mercury the Itinerary of Mr. Gray with my manuscript additions. I don't know whether I have made them too long or too short, but as you are entirely at liberty to curtail or lengthen, or omit such as you disapprove, it does not signify what they are. They have indeed a fault I cannot mend, unless by time, and which yet I probably shall not mend : I mean they are

LETTER 1545. — ¹ James Bruce
(1730–1794), the traveller.

² Who betted on the man's living
under water twelve hours. *Walpole*.

not complete; for there are some considerable places that I never saw, and I am grown too lazy, since I can walk but little, to think of visiting them now.

I shall take care how I wish earnestly again for your coming southward: you gave me so little of your time and was so much in request, that I was only tantalized. I like your fixed stars that one can pore at when one pleases; but there is such a fuss with you comets, that even women and children must know all about them.

I know nothing but that we have deplorable weather; the sun, like you, has called but once at Strawberry. To make amends, the cold has brought on the winter fruits so fast, that I had a codlin tart to-day, and expect pears and apples ripe before peaches and nectarines. I wish we had never imported those southern delicacies, unless we had brought their climate over too. We should have been very happy with our hips and haws, and rainy days, and *called it luxury*. I cannot afford to have hothouses, and glass-houses, and acres of tanner's bark, as every tradesman has at his villa, or at his mistress's villa. I kill my own strawberries and cream, and can aim no higher.

Do you know that it would be charity to send me something to print, or to tell me what I shall print? My press is at a dead stand, and I would fain employ it while I may, without permission of a licencer, for though it has always been as harmless as if it was under the cannon of Sion Hill, it would be *vocal no more*, if it might only utter Dutch Bibles, or editions *in usum Delphini*¹. I know you have twenty things in your *portefeuille*. I will print as few copies as you please. I have no ambition of serving or amusing the public, and think of nothing but diverting myself and the few I love. What signifies taking the trouble

LETTER 1546.—¹ Lady Holderness was a Dutchwoman, and her hus-

band (the owner of Sion Hill) was Governor to the Prince of Wales.

to be put, I don't know how soon, into an *Index Expurgatorius*! To-day is ours; let us enjoy it.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1547. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 21, 1774.

YOUR illness, dear Sir, is the worst excuse you could make me; and the worse, as you may be well in a night, if you will, by taking six grains of James's powder. He cannot cure death; but he can most complaints that are not mortal or chronical. He could cure you so soon of colds, that he would cure you of another distemper, to which I doubt you are a little subject, the fear of them. I hope you were certain that illness is a legal plea for missing induction, or you will have nursed a cough and hoarseness with too much tenderness; as they certainly could bear a journey. Never see my face again, if you are not rector of Burnham. How can you be so bigoted to *Milton*¹? I should have thought the very name would have prejudiced you against the place, as the name is all that could approach towards reconciling me to the fens. I shall be very glad to see you here, whenever you have resolution enough to quit your cell. But since Burnham and the neighbourhood of Windsor and Eton have no charms for you, can I expect that Strawberry Hill should have any? Methinks, when one grows old, one's contemporary friends should be our best amusement; for younger people are soon tired of us, and our old stories: but I have found the contrary in some of mine. For your part, you care for conversing with none but the dead: for I reckon the unborn, for whom you are writing, as much dead as those from whom you collect.

LETTER 1547.—Dated by C. June 21.

¹ Cole was an extreme Tory.

You certainly ask no favour, dear Sir, when you want prints of me. They are at anybody's service that thinks them worth having. The owner sets very little value on them, since he sets very little indeed on himself; as a man, a very faulty one; and as an author, a very middling one: which whoever thinks a comfortable rank, is not at all of my opinion. Pray convince me that you think I mean sincerely, by not answering me with a compliment. It is very weak to be pleased with flattery; the stupidest of all delusions to beg it. From you I should take it ill. We have known one another almost fifty years—to very little purpose, indeed, if any ceremony is necessary, or downright sincerity not established between us. Only tell me that you are recovered, and that I shall see you some time or other. I have finished the Catalogue of my collection; but you shall never have it without fetching, nor, though a less punishment, the prints you desire. I propose in time to have plates of my house added to the Catalogue, yet I cannot afford them, unless by degrees. Engravers are grown so much dearer, without my growing richer, that I must have patience! a quality I seldom have, *but* when I must. Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. I have lately been at Ampthill, and saw Queen Katherine's cross. It is not near large enough for the situation, and would be fitter for a garden than a park: but it is executed in the truest and best taste. Lord Ossory is quite satisfied, as well as I, and designs Mr. Essex a present of some guineas. If ever I am richer, I shall consult the same honest man about building my offices, for which I have a plan: but if I have no more money ever, I will not run in debt, and distress myself; and therefore remit my designs to chance and a little economy.

1548. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 30, 1774.

I CAN satisfy few of your Ladyship's questions about Lady Holland, except by what little I heard from Mr. Crawford, who came hither one evening between eight and nine, and went away the moment he had breakfasted the next morning. Of her death he told me nothing. The fortune he thinks much more considerable than the family expected. This Lord Holland will have 10,000*l.* a year. Charles Fox will be entirely cleared, have his place, and 200*l.* a year, and 10,000*l.*, a pretty beginning for a younger brother, for Julius Cæsar not a breakfast. Henry¹ has 20,000*l.*, and 900*l.* a year. There is a strange legacy to Lady Sarah² of 200*l.*, and Mrs. Mellier³ is forgotten. Undoubtedly poor Lady Holland knew little what she said: indeed, six hundred drops of laudanum every day could leave her very little reflection.

Lord Thomond's no-will is still more surprising, as he was persuaded he should die this year. He had had a draft of a will from his lawyer three years ago, and had not filled up the blanks. As he had taken the government of Lord Egremont's next brother⁴, that boy was supposed his heir. Lord Egremont has made strict inquiry, and said he would comply literally with whatever he could learn were his uncle's instructions; but nobody can recollect the smallest hint. They say Lord Egremont was his favourite, and I believe he chose this way of heaping everything on the head of the Wyndhams.

LETTER 1548.—¹ Henry Fox, Lord Holland's youngest son.

² Lady Sarah Bunbury, sister of Lady Holland.

³ Mrs. Melliar's maiden name was Cheeke. She had formerly been com-

panion to Lady Ilchester and to Lady Holland.

⁴ Hon. Percy Charles Wyndham, second son of second Earl of Egremont.

Pray, Madam, tell the Duchess of Bedford how sensible I am of her goodness. I am thoroughly so of the merits of the whole Fitzpatrickhood, but it is very hard to set me on thrumming a lyre like an old blind harper when you have such a cygnet amongst you as Mr. Richard⁵. I shall certainly let him know immediately how glad I shall be to see him, if he will bring his own company with him, or I can assemble any he would like; but do not think I will punish him with a *tête-à-tête*, and my stories of the last age. Nothing upon earth is so insipid as my life to anybody but myself. For example, how do you think, Madam, he would have found me employed if he had called yesterday? Writing the history of Twickenham, and surrounded with books of peerages to find out who an ancient Lady Westmoreland⁶ was that lived in the back lane here. Think of my joy when I discovered that she was sister of Grammont's Lady Shrewsbury⁷, and aunt of Myra⁸, of the first Duchess of Richmond⁹, and of a Lady Molyneux¹⁰, who was a toast of the Kit Cat Club, and died smoking a pipe! Judge how much Mr. Fitzpatrick would be amused with such game!

There is little probability of my accompanying Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer to Paris. I am within two months of my biennial fit of the gout, and for the last four days have been alarmed with symptoms of it, as great

⁵ Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick.

⁶ Lady Dorothy Brudenell, youngest daughter of second Earl of Cardigan; m. (1) Charles Fane, third Earl of Westmorland; (2) Robert Constable, third Viscount Dunbar; d. 1740.

⁷ Lady Anna Maria Brudenell, m. (1) Francis Talbot, eleventh Earl of Shrewsbury; (2) George Rodney Bridges; d. 1702.

⁸ Hon. Frances Brudenell, m. (1) Charles Livingston, second Earl of Newburgh; (2) Richard Bellew, third Baron Bellew of Duleek; (3) Sir Thomas Smythe. She was celebrated

as 'Myra' by Lord Lansdowne and by Dr. William King (nephew of her third husband) in a mock-heroic poem called *The Toast*.

⁹ Hon. Anne Brudenell, m. (1) Henry Belasyse, second Baron Belasyse of Worlaby; (2) Charles Lenox, first Duke of Richmond; d. 1722.

¹⁰ Hon. Mary Brudenell (d. 1765), m. (1) Richard Molyneux, third Viscount Molyneux; (2) Captain Peter Osborne. These ladies were daughters of Francis Brudenell, Lord Brudenell, eldest son of second Earl of Cardigan, whom he predeceased.

nervousness and feverish pains flying about me. It would be more prudent to go to Bath, or to the seaside: I detest the first, and do not know how to amuse myself at the second. In truth I am not very ill, for I slept last night from half an hour past twelve till nine; but my dread of the gout is incredible, and of having it anywhere but at home still greater, so that unless I have a slight fit soon, I shall not have courage for a long journey, though I have curiosity to peep at the new reign. I have been charmingly interrupted; Mr. Fitzpatrick has been here two hours; I told him what I had said to your Ladyship, and sent him back with his pocket stuffed with books, but such as he may read when his servant is curling his hair. One was a collection of ballads in Queen Anne's time! I hope they will put him in tune. Now for the court of France. Monsieur de Boynes, a rising genius in the last ministry, is turned out, and a Monsieur Turgot¹¹ made Secretary of State for the Marine in his room, a friend of Maurepas. The Duke of Orléans and the Duke of Chartres are forbidden the court for refusing to assist at the catafalque of the late King, when they must have saluted the Parliament, whom they will not acknowledge—however, this rod is supposed to be laid on only in ceremony, and my letters bid me not conclude thence that the new Parliament will be maintained; accordingly I conclude it will not. My faith about things indifferent is pretty obedient, and may be led like a child. Consequently I would not for the world have a table of *trou-madame*¹², without a king and a queen: I should detest a republican table, and wish

¹¹ Anne Robert Jacques Turgot (1727–1781), Baron de l'Aune. He became Contrôleur Général des Finances in August 1774. His career as a financial reformer was put a stop to by the clamours of those who objected to his plans for the abolition

of pensions and useless offices. He was dismissed by Louis XVI in 1776.

¹² 'Sorte de jeu formé de plusieurs arcades numérotées qu'on cherche à enfler avec des petites boules d'ivoire.' (Larousse.)

I could have one cut out of the same log of wood with your Ladyship's for the sake of the hereditary line.

Let me beseech you if it thunders to go into the cellar, and say the collect about bad weather. I could not bear another disappointment in the right line, and am not indifferent to that succession, but beg my *trou-madame* may have a king as well as a queen.

1549. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Aug. 3, 1774.

I TOLD you in my last that her Grace of Kingston was arrived. Had I written it four-and-twenty hours later, I might have told you she was gone again, with much precipitation, and with none of the pomp of her usual progresses. In short, she had missed her lawyer's letters, which warned her against returning. A prosecution for bigamy was ready to meet her. She decamped in the middle of the night; and six hours after the officers of justice were at her door to seize her. This is but an unheroic catastrophe of her romance; and though she is as thorough a comedian as Sixtus Quintus, it would be a little awkward to take possession of his villa, after being burnt in the hand. What will be the issue of the suit and lawsuit I cannot tell. As so vast an estate is the prize, the lawyers will probably protract it beyond this century. Her friend the Electress of Saxony¹ said to the Duke of Gloucester, 'Poor thing! what could she do; she was so young when she was first married?'

Lady Holland is dead—just three weeks after her Lord. She has cleared all the debts of her two elder sons; the eldest has a large fortune, and Charles a decent beginning

LETTER 1549.—¹ Maria Antonia of Bavaria, wife of the Elector Frederick Augustus III of Saxony.

of another ; though it may not last a night, if he chooses to make it a codicil to all he has lost, and scorns to be indebted to anything but his own parts for his elevation.

Lord Thomond² is dead too ; and though possessed of near ten thousand a year, and fifty thousand in money, nay, though he has long expected to die suddenly, and at the same age with his grandfather, father, and brother, as he has done, he could not bring himself to make a will, and the whole real estate falls to his nephew, Lord Egremont.

These are all the events of this inactive summer ; and I chose this small paper, as abundantly large enough to contain them. Nay, I do not see how I shall reach its third page.

I find that in France they are persuaded the old Parliament will be restored. The Dukes of Orléans and Chartres are again forbidden the court for refusing to assist at the catafalque of the late King, where they must have saluted the new Parliament : yet this is not thought a disgrace. Monsieur de Boines is removed for a Monsieur Turgot. I see, however, that the old spirit remains at least in one quarter, and that they continue butchering the poor Corsicans. Is it true that the King of Sardinia is to have that island ? How unfortunate it is that little countries should retain a spirit of independence, which they have not strength to preserve ; and that great nations, who might throw it off, court the yoke !

4th.

Oh, my dear Sir, what a heartfelt pleasure I have had this moment ! I have been to Mr. Croft's to see your picture. It brought the tears into my eyes ; though thirty years have fattened you, made you florid, I traced every feature, and saw the whole likeness in the character and

² Percy Windham O'Brien, Earl of Thomond, second son of Sir William Windham, and younger brother of Charles, Earl of Egremont. *Walpole*.

countenance—yes, there is all your goodness. I admire the art of the painter too; there is harmony in the tone, and though he has given you an Adonis-wig, which grave we should not think adapted to your age, he has managed it so as to have no juvenile air, but to harmonize in the utmost propriety with the decency of the ministerial composure. In short, as I did once before, I wanted to seize it for my own—but no! it will go to Linton³, and I hope remain there for ages—which would not, I suppose, be its fate at Strawberry; that poor bauble will probably be condemned and pulled to pieces by whomever I shall give it to. Our living deeds create no gratitude; can we expect our affection expressed in a last will should make stronger impressions?

Mr. Croft showed me a letter from you on Birmingham covers for dishes. He has written, but received no answer. I told him I would advise you against them. All plated silver wears abominably, and turns to brass, like the age. You would not bear it six months. He told me that your nephew Horace is on the road to you: how glad I am! what joy to embrace dear Gal's son! I think I have seen too many bad hearts in the countenance, not to know when I see a good one; yes, yes, you will find Gal and yourself in your nephew. I am as sure there is goodness in his heart, as I am that there is sense in his head, and quickness in his parts. I was charmed with him last year; and don't fancy it is partiality if you think so too the first minute you see him. Certain characters strike fire from each other.

The King of Prussia has been amazingly gracious to General Conway, and ordered him to attend him to all his reviews. This is most astonishing favour to an Englishman. For my part, I am sorry; I had rather such virtue

³ The seat of the Manns in Kent.

had been marked by his frown. 'There are many Marius's in that Cæsar,' a quotation you will not suspect me of intending for a compliment! Adieu! How I love your picture! Tell me who painted it. I am sure not the one-eyed German who drew Madame Griffoni like a surly Margravine.

1550. TO GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday, Aug. 10th,
at night.

I THINK I shall be with you¹ on Saturday; at least, I know that I intend to set out to-morrow, and lie at Park Place. But it is so formidable to me to begin a journey, and I have changed my mind so often about this, though I like it so much, that I beg you will not be disappointed if you do not see me. If I were juvenile enough to set off at midnight, and travel all night, you would be sure of me; but folks who do anything eagerly neither know nor care what they do. Sedate me, who deliberate, at least do not determine but on preference; therefore, if I surmount difficulties, I shall at least have some merit with you; and, if I do not, you must allow that the difficulties were prodigious, when they surmounted so much inclination.

In this wavering situation I wish you good night, and hope I shall wake to-morrow as resolute as Hercules or Mr. Bruce. But pray do not give me live-beef for supper.

Yours ever,

H. W.

LETTER 1550.—¹ At Matson, George Selwyn's seat near Gloucester.

1551. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Thursday, Aug. 11, 1774.

THOUGH my chaise is at the door, and the wind and tide fair, I cannot receive a line from you, Madam, to tell me so kindly you are well, without stopping a minute to answer it. I am disappointed, I am vexed, but I am happy you are so soon in spirits again. Don't trust to your strength, nor your health, which is the only way to keep both. Don't be brave this month: the weather is already much cooler, and you need not catch cold to prove how intolerable the heat is. I don't design to acknowledge Anne III; I shall call her *Madame de Trop*, as they named one of the late King of France's daughters. A *dauphin*! a *dauphin*! I will repeat it as often as the *Graces*. Apropos, Mr. Cambridge came yesterday and said he must ask to see something I had lately written. I had kept it a profound secret, but concluded Garrick had told him of the verses¹, and that it was vain to deny them. Well, I produced them. He stared, was civil about them, and said he was glad he had got them into the bargain, for he had not heard of them, but meant the parody of Lord Chesterfield's Letters², which was quite out of my head. I was horridly out of countenance, and to rap my own fingers for my blunder, would not show him what he wanted. This comes of your Ladyship's flattering me!

One may weed and weed one's heart, but if a grain of that devil, vanity, lights on it, it springs up till it chokes one. You have no notion how vexed I was at my own folly—a boy-poet would scarce have been caught so! It is in vain to say, 'The woman gave me, and I did eat.'

Adieu! my Eve; as angry as I am, I wish you no worse

LETTER 1551.—¹ Horace Walpole's verses on *The Three Vernons*.

² See *Works* of Lord Orford, vol. iv. p. 355.

punishment than hers, and I hope it will fall on you before eleven months are over.

1552. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

DEAR SIR,

Matson, near Gloucester, Aug. 15, 1774.

As I am your disciple in antiquities, for you studied them when I was but a scoffer, I think it my duty to give you some account of my journeyings in the good cause. You will not dislike my date: I am in the very mansion where King Charles the First and his two eldest sons lay during the siege, and there are marks of the last's hacking with his hanger on a window, as he told Mr. Selwyn's grandfather afterwards. The present master has done due honour to the royal residence, and erected a good marble bust of the martyr in a little gallery. In a window is a shield in painted glass, with that King's and his Queen's arms, which I gave him.—So you see I am not a rebel, when *alma mater* antiquity stands godmother.

I went again to the cathedral, and, on seeing the monument of Edward II, a new *historic doubt* started, which I pray you to solve. His Majesty has a longish beard, and such were certainly worn at that time. Who is the *first* historian that tells the story of his being shaven with cold water from a ditch, and weeping to supply warm, as he was carried to Berkeley Castle? Is not this apocryphal? The house whence Bishop Hooper was carried to the stake is still standing *tale quale*. I made a visit to his actual successor, Warburton, who is very infirm, speaks with much hesitation, and, they say, begins to lose his memory. They have destroyed the beautiful cross; the two battered heads of Henry III and Edward III are in the postmaster's garden.

Yesterday I made a jaunt four miles hence that pleased

me exceedingly, to Prinknash¹, the individual villa of the abbots of Gloucester—I wished you there with their mitre on. It stands on a glorious but impracticable hill, in the midst of a little forest of beech, and commanding Elysium. The house is small, but has good rooms, and though modernized here and there, not extravagantly. On the ceiling of the hall is Edward IVth's jovial device, a *faucon serrure*. The chapel is low and small, but antique, and with painted glass, with many angels in their coronation robes, i.e. wings and crowns. Henry VIII and Jane Seymour lay here; in the dining-room are their arms in glass, and of Catherine of Arragon, and of Bray and Bridges. Under a window, a barbarous bas-relief head of Harry, young; as it is still on a sign at an ale-house, on the descent of the hill. Think of my amazement, when they showed me the chapel plate, and I found on it, on four pieces, my own arms, quartering my mother-in-law Skerret's, and in a shield of pretence, those of Fortescue, certainly by mistake for those of my sister-in-law, as the barony of Clinton was in abeyance between her and Fortescue Lord Clinton². The whole is modern and blundered, for Skerret should be impaled, not quartered, and instead of our crest, are two spears tied together in a ducal coronet, and no coronet for my brother, in whose time this plate must have been made, and at whose sale it was probably bought, as he finished the repairs of the church at Houghton, for which, I suppose, this decoration was intended—but the silversmith was no herald, you see.

As I descended the hill, I found in a wretched cottage a child in an ancient oaken cradle, exactly in the form of that lately published from the cradle of Edward II—I purchased it for five shillings, but don't know whether I shall

LETTER 1552.—¹ Near Painswick.

² See Table I.

have fortitude enough to transport it to Strawberry Hill—people would conclude me in my second childhood.

To-day I have been at Berkeley and Thornbury Castles. The first disappointed me much, though very entire. It is much smaller than I expected, but very entire, except a small part burnt two years ago, while the present Earl was in the house. The fire began in the housekeeper's room, who never appeared more; but as she was strict over the servants, and not a bone of her was found, it was supposed that she was murdered, and the body conveyed away. The situation is not elevated nor beautiful, and little improvements made of late, but some silly ones *à la chinoise* by the present Dowager³. In good sooth, I can give you but a very imperfect account, for instead of the Lord's being gone to dine with the Mayor of Gloucester, as I expected, I found him in the midst of all his captains of the militia. I am so sillily shy of strangers and youngsters, that I hurried through the chambers, and looked for nothing but the way out of every room. I just observed that there were many bad portraits of the family, but none ancient, as if the Berkeleys had been commissaries, and raised themselves in the last war. There is a plentiful addition of those of Lord Berkeley of Stratton; but no Knights Templars, or barons as old as Edward I. Yet are there three beds on which there may have been as frisky doings three centuries ago, as there probably have been within these ten years. The room shown for the murder of Edward II, and the 'shrieks of an agonizing King⁴,' I verily believe to be genuine. It is a dismal chamber, almost at top of the house, quite detached, and to be approached only by a kind of foot-bridge, and from that descends a large flight of steps that

³ The Dowager Countess of Berkeley married secondly Robert (afterwards Earl) Nugent.

⁴ See *The Bard*:—

'The shrieks of death, thro' Berkeley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing King!'

terminate on strong gates; exactly a situation for a *corps de garde*. In that room they show you a cast of a face in plaster, and tell you it was taken from Edward's. I was not quite so easy of faith about that, for it is evidently the face of Charles I. The steeple of the church, lately rebuilt handsomely, stands some paces from the body: in the latter are three tombs of the old Berkeleys, with cumbent figures. The wife of the Lord Berkeley⁵ who was supposed to be privy to the murder has a curious headgear: it is like a long horseshoe, quilted in quaterfoils, and, like Lord Foppington's wig, allows no more than the breadth of a half-crown to be discovered of the face. Stay, I think I mistake; the husband was a conspirator against Richard II, not Edward; but in those days loyalty was not so rife as at present.

From Berkeley Castle I went to Thornbury⁶, of which the ruins are half ruined. It would have been glorious, if finished—I wish the Lords of Berkeley had retained the spirit of deposing till Harry the VIIIth's time! The situation is fine, though that was not the fashion, for all the windows of the great apartment look into the inner court—the prospect was left to the servants. Here I had two adventures. I could find nobody to show me about. I saw a paltry house that I took for the sexton's, at the corner of the close, and bade my servant ring and ask who could show me the castle. A voice in a passion flew from a casement, and issued from a divine—'What! was it *his* business to show the castle? Go look for somebody else! What did the fellow ring for, as if the house was on fire?'

⁵ Thomas Berkeley (d. 1361), eighth Baron Berkeley. The effigy is that of his second wife, Catherine Clivedon, widow of Sir Peter le Veel. Lord Berkeley figured in the reigns of Edward II and III. He died

before the accession of Richard II.

⁶ The remains of a castle begun by Edward Stafford (1478–1521), third Duke of Buckingham, executed for high treason in the reign of Henry VIII.

The poor Swiss came back in a fright, and said the doctor had sworn at him. Well! we scrambled over a stone stile, saw a room or two glazed near the gate, and rung at it. A damsel came forth, and satisfied our curiosity. When we had done seeing, I said, 'Child, we don't know our way, and want to be directed into the London road: I see the Duke's⁷ steward yonder at the window; pray desire him to come to me, that I may consult him.' She went, he stood staring at us at the window—and sent his footman. I do not think courtesy is resident at Thornbury. As I returned through the close, the divine came running out of breath, and without his beaver or bands, and calls out, 'Sir, I am come to justify myself; your servant says I swore at him, I am no swearer—Lord bless me! (dropping his voice) is it Mr. Walpole?' 'Yes, Sir, and I think you was Lord Beauchamp's tutor at Oxford, but I have forgot your name.'—'Holwell⁸, Sir.' 'Oh yes——' and then I comforted him, and laid the ill-breeding on my footman's being a foreigner, but could not help saying, I really had taken his house for the sexton's.—'Yes, Sir, it is not very good without, won't you please to walk in?' I did, and found the inside ten times worse, and a lean wife, suckling a child. He was making an index to Homer, is going to publish the chief beauties, and I believe had just been reading some of the delicate civilities that pass between Agamemnon and Achilles, and that what my servant took for oaths were only Greek compliments. Adieu! You see I have not a line more of paper.

Yours ever,

H. W.

⁷ The Duke of Norfolk, who bought the castle and manor of Thornbury from the fourth Earl of Stafford.

⁸ Rev. William Holwell (1726–

1798). He published *The Beauties of Homer, selected from the Iliad*, in 1775.

1553. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 18, 1774.

It is very hard, that because you do not get my letters, you will not let me receive yours, who do receive them. I have not had a line from you these five weeks. Of your honours and glories fame has told me¹; and for aught I know, you may be a *veldt-marshal* by this time, and despise such a poor cottager as me. Take notice, I shall disclaim you in my turn, if you are sent on a command against Dantzic, or to usurp a new district in Poland.

I have seen no armies, kings, or empresses, and cannot send you such august gazettes; nor are they what I want to hear of. I like to hear you are well and diverted; nay, have pipped towards the latter, by desiring Lady Ailesbury to send you Monsieur de Guisnes's invitation to a military fête at Metz². For my part, I wish you was returned to your plough. Your Sabine farm³ is in high beauty. I have lain there twice within this week, going to and from a visit to George Selwyn, near Gloucester: a tour as much to my taste as yours to you. For fortified towns I have seen ruined castles. Unluckily, in that of Berkeley I found a whole regiment of militia in garrison, and as many young officers as if the Countess⁴ was in possession, and ready to surrender at indiscretion. I endeavoured to comfort myself by figuring that they were guarding Edward II. I have seen many other ancient sights without asking leave of the King of Prussia: it would not please me so much to write *to* him, as it once did to write *for* him⁵.

LETTER 1553.—¹ Alluding to the distinguished notice taken of General Conway by the King of Prussia. *Walpole*.

² To see the review of the French regiment of Carabineers, then commanded by Monsieur de Guines.

Walpole.

³ Park Place. *Walpole*.

⁴ The Countess of Berkeley.

⁵ Alluding to the letter to Rousseau in the name of the King of Prussia. *Walpole*.

They have found at least seventy thousand pounds of Lord Thomond's⁶. George Howard⁷ has decked himself with a red riband, money, and honours! Charming things! and yet one may be very happy without them.

The young Mr. Coke⁸ is returned from his travels in love with the Pretender's queen⁹, who has permitted him to have her picture. What can I tell you more? Nothing. Indeed, if I only write to postmasters, my letter is long enough. Everybody's head but mine is full of elections. I had the satisfaction at Gloucester, where George Selwyn is canvassing, of reflecting on my own wisdom. *Suave mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis*, &c. I am certainly the greatest philosopher in the world, without ever having thought of being so: always employed, and never busy: eager about trifles, and indifferent to everything serious. Well, if it is not philosophy, at least it is content. I am as pleased here with my own nutshell, as any monarch you have seen these two months astride his eagle—not but I was dissatisfied when I missed you at Park Place, and was peevish at your being in an Aulic chamber. Adieu!

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P.S. They tell us from Vienna that the peace is made between Tisiphone and the Turk: is it true¹⁰?

⁶ Percy Wyndham O'Brien. He was the second son of Sir William Wyndham, the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Queen Anne, and took the name of O'Brien pursuant to the will of his uncle the Earl of Thomond in Ireland. *Walpole*.

⁷ Lieutenant-General Sir George Howard (d. 1796), of the family of the Earls of Effingham, Governor of

Chelsea Hospital; Field Marshal, 1793.

⁸ Thomas William Coke (1754-1842), created Earl of Leicester in 1837.

⁹ The Countess of Albany.

¹⁰ Peace between the Turks and Russians was signed on July 21, 1774.

1554. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Excuse me, but I cannot take your advice, nor intend to print any more for the public. When I offer you my press it is most selfishly, and to possess your writings, for I would only print a few copies for your friends and mine. My last volume of the *Anecdotes of Painting* has long been finished, and as a debt shall some time or other be published, but there I take my leave of Messieurs the readers. Let Dr. Johnson please this age with the fustian of his style, and the meanness of his spirit; both are good and great enough for the taste and practice predominant. I think this country sinking fast into ruin; and when it is become an absolute monarchy and thence insignificant, I do not desire to be remembered by slaves, and in a French province. I would not be Virgil or Boileau on such conditions. Present amusement is all my object in reading, writing, or printing. To gratify the first especially, I wish to see your poem finished:

You, who erewhile the happy garden sung,
continue to

sing

Recovered Paradise!

I am less impatient for Gray's *Life*, being sure of seeing it, whether published or not: and as I conclude neither his letters nor Latin poems will be admired to the height they deserve, I am jealous of his fame, and do not like its being cast before swine. In short, I wish his and your writings to meet with a fate that not many years ago was reckoned an ignominy, that they may be sent to the colonies! for

Arts and sciences will travel west
and

The sad Nine in Britain's evil hour
will embark for America.

I have been in Gloucestershire, and can add a little to the catalogue, having seen Berkeley Castle, Thornbury Castle, and a charming small old house of the abbots of Gloucester. Indeed I could not enjoy the first, for the Earl was in it with all his militia, and dispelled visions. To Wentworth Castle I shall certainly make no visit this year. If I went any journey it would be to Paris; but indolence persisting in her apprehensions of the gout, though I have had no symptoms of it for some time, will fix me here and hereabouts. I discover charms in idleness that I never had a notion of before, and perceive that age brings pleasures as well as takes away. There is a serenity in having nothing to do, that is delicious: I am persuaded that little princes assumed the title of Serene Highness from that sensation.

Your assured friend,

HORACE LE FAINÉANT.

Given at our Castle of Nonsuch, Aug. 23, 1774.

Salute our trusty and well-beloved the Palsgrave¹ on our part.

1555. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Monday night, Aug. 23, 1774.

Your Ladyship's letter did not arrive till I was gone to Goodwood, and sat here quietly till I returned to-night, for as my voyages and travels are seldom longer than a parenthesis, I never oblige my dispatches to follow me. Though you do not ask, I am sure you wish to know what I heard of the Duchess of Leinster¹. Not a word was mentioned. Last night the Duke received a letter to tell him

LETTER 1554. —¹ Mason's friend, the Rev. William Palgrave.

LETTER 1555. —¹ Emilia Lennox, widow of the first Duke of Leinster,

married secondly (about this time) William Ogilvie, her sons' tutor. The match was strongly disapproved of by her family.

his niece² is married to Lord Bellamont. Lady A.³ asked the Duchess of R.⁴ about the mother. She said they had heard the report, but did not believe it; and indeed they were all in such good spirits, that I cannot think they give any credit to the marriage.

I saw charming Lady Sarah⁵, who is a little fatter, but as fresh and beautiful as ever: her little girl is sweetly pretty and lively. We had much billiards, music, loo, and company; I could take no part in the two first; I love most of the last, that I know, and as there were two or three children, and two- or three-and-forty dogs, I could not want amusement, for I generally prefer both to what the common people call *Christians*.

I like all the account you give me, Madam, but of your nerves, and of those I don't at all despair. When Madame de Trop⁶ ceases to be the youngest of your race, I dare to say I shall love her, especially when Lady Anne begins to love her less than her brother; but, remember, a brother is the *sine quâ non* of my reconciliation.

I don't pretend to call this a letter, it is only a note, I know; but what can I tell you, Madam, from country-houses? or is anything so bad as a letter when one has really no news, and nothing particular to say?

P.S. I had sealed my letter, but open it again that your

² Lady Emilia Maria Margaret Fitzgerald, eldest daughter of first Duke of Leinster; m. (Aug. 20, 1774) Charles Coote, first Earl of Bellamont.

³ The Countess of Ailesbury.

⁴ The Duchess of Richmond, sister-in-law of the Duchess of Leinster.

⁵ Lady Sarah Bunbury was separated from her husband, from whom she eloped in 1769 with Lord William Gordon. She was divorced from Sir Charles Bunbury in 1776. She was at this time living in retirement at

Goodwood, where her brother, the Duke of Richmond, built her a small house in the park, called Halnaker. The daughter mentioned above bore the surname of Bunbury, although she was not the child of Sir Charles Bunbury. She died of consumption, unmarried, in 1785, four years after Lady Sarah's marriage to Hon. George Napier.

⁶ Lady Gertrude Fitzpatrick (born in August 1774), the youngest of Lord Ossory's two daughters. She died unmarried in 1841.

Ladyship may have the freshest intelligence of the following great news—very important, at least, to my friends in France. In a postscript ⁷ I have just received are these words:—

‘Choses nouvelles et très certaines, M. Terray est exilé à la Motte. M. Turgot a les Finances. M. de Sartine la Marine. La Police n’est point donnée. M. le Chancelier ⁸ est exilé pour trois jours à la Bruière, au bout desquels trois jours il a ordre d’aller dans une de ses terres beaucoup plus éloignées. M. de Miromenil ⁹, ci-devant Premier Président de Rouen, est Garde des Sceaux, et Vice-Chancelier.’—I am going to make a French bonfire.

1556. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 2, 1774.

You think I write seldom, my dear Sir, but how can I help it? Not seldomer, I hope, than in other peaceful summers. In vacations of London and Parliament, little happens weighty enough to bear so long a journey. This season has been singularly barren. Perhaps events may thicken, which, prosperous or not, are equally propitious to correspondences. The scene in America, they say, grows very gloomy; Cæsar¹ frowns on the Elector of Hanover; but I know neither Atlantic nor German politics. *You* tell me what the Turks and Russians are to do next, but before I received your letter, I could have told you that they have agreed to do nothing more—which is much about what they have been doing all the war. Well, still one has something to live upon. The King of France has at last spoken out; both the Chancellor and Terray² are banished, and the old

⁷ See letter of Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole of Aug. 24, 1774.

⁸ Maupéou.

⁹ Armand Thomas Hue de Miromenil (1723–1796).

LETTER 1556.—¹ The Emperor disagreeing with the King on German politics. *Walpole*.

² The Abbé Terray, Comptroller-General of the Finances. *Walpole*.

Parliament restored, or to be restored. As little as I care about the revolutions of the great planets, I am mightily pleased with this convulsion. I like old constitutions recovering themselves; and I abhorred the Chancellor, a consummate villain, who would have served Alexander VI and Cæsar Borgia too, and wished no better than to have restored St. Ignatius and St. Nero. This young King is exceedingly in my good graces; and may gain my whole heart whenever he pleases, if he will but release Madame du Barri, for, though the tool of a vile faction, I would not be angry with a street-walker; nor make no difference between Thais and Frédégonde; between Con Phillips³ and the Czarina.

By the way, one hears no more of my friend Pugatscheff; yet perhaps he contributed to this peace. It is now part of my plan that the King of France should dethrone that woman, and their Majesties of Prussia and Sweden, and restore Corsica—not to the Genoese, but to themselves. You may think all this a great deal, but it is not a quarter so difficult as conquering oneself, and relinquishing despotism. It is a greater victory to make happy than miserable; but then what glorious rewards! Think, how contemptible the end of Louis the Well-beloved, how bright the dawn of Louis XVI! Can any power taste so sweet as this single word on the statue of Henri Quatre, *Resurrexit*? And then, what a blessed retirement the Chancellor's! How he must enjoy himself, when the loss of power is sweetened with the curses of a whole nation, who have not cursed him in vain! My whole heart makes a bonfire on this occasion. What a century, which sees the Jesuits annihilated, and absolute power relinquished! I begin to believe in the millennium, when the just shall reign on earth. I scorn to say a word more, or profane such a subject with heathen topics. Adieu!

³ Teresia Constantia Phillips (d. 1765), a notorious and disreputable

personage, who published an *Apology* for her conduct in 1748.

P.S. My affection for your concerns betrays me into a weakness ; I cannot help being so irreligious as to tell you that you are to have a new neighbour, though not very soon ; Lord Carlisle is to succeed Mr. Lynch at Turin⁴.

1557. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 7, 1774.

I DID not think you had been so like the rest of the world, as, when you pretended to be visiting armies, to go in search of gold and silver mines¹ ! The favours of courts and the smiles of emperors and kings, I see, have corrupted even you, and perverted you to a nabob. Have you brought away an ingot in the calf of your leg ? What abomination have you committed ? All the gazettes in Europe have sent you on different negotiations : instead of returning with a treaty in your pocket, you will only come back with bills of exchange. I don't envy your subterraneous travels, nor the hospitality of the Hungarians. Where did you find a spoonful of Latin about you ? I have not attempted to speak Latin these thirty years, without perceiving I was talking Italian thickened with terminations in *us* and *orum*. I should have as little expected to find an Ovid in those regions ; but I suppose the gentry of Presburg read him for a fashionable author, as our 'squires and their wives do the last collections of ballads that have been sung at Vauxhall and Marybone. I wish you may have brought away some sketches of Duke Albert's² architecture. You know I deal in the works of royal authors, though I have never admired any of their own buildings, not excepting King Solomon's

⁴ This report proved untrue.

LETTER 1557.—¹ Mr. Conway had gone to see the gold and silver mines of Cremnitz, in the neighbourhood

of Gran in Hungary. *Walpole.*

² Probably Albert, Duke of Saxe-Teschen, son-in-law of the Empress Maria Theresa.

Temple. Stanley^s and Edmondson in Hungary! What carried them thither? The chase of mines, too? The first, perhaps, waddled thither obliquely, as a parrot would have done whose direction was to Naples.

Well, I am glad you have been entertained, and seen such a variety of sights. You don't mind fatigues and hardships, and hospitality, the two extremes that to me poison travelling. I shall never see anything more, unless I meet with a ring that renders one invisible. It was but the other day that, being with George Selwyn at Gloucester, I went to view Berkeley Castle, knowing the Earl was to dine with the Mayor of Gloucester. Alas! when I arrived, he had put off the party to enjoy his militia a day longer, and the house was full of officers. They might be in the Hungarian dress, for aught I knew; for I was so dismayed, that I would fain have persuaded the housekeeper that she could not show me the apartments; and when she opened the hall, and I saw it full of captains, I hid myself in a dark passage, and nothing could persuade me to enter, till they had the civility to quit the place. When I was forced at last to go over the castle, I ran through it without seeing anything, as if I had been afraid of being detained prisoner.

I have no news to send you: if I had any, I would not conclude, as all correspondents do, that Lady Ailesbury left nothing untold. Lady Powis is gone to hold mobs at Ludlow, where there is actual war, and where a *knight*, I forget his name, one of their friends, has been *almost cut in two* with a scythe. When you have seen all the other armies in Europe, you will be just in time for many election-battles—perhaps, for a war in America, whither more troops are going. Many of those already sent have deserted; and to be sure the prospect there is not smiling. Apropos, Lord

^s Mr. Hans Stanley. *Walpole*.

Mahon⁴, whom Lord Stanhope, his father, will not suffer to wear powder because wheat is so dear, was presented t'other day in coal-black hair and a white feather: they said 'he had been *tarred and feathered*.'

In France you will find a new scene⁵. The Chancellor is sent, a little before his time, to the devil. The old Parliament is expected back. I am sorry to say I shall not meet you there. It will be too late in the year for me to venture, especially as I now live in dread of my biennial gout, and should die of it in an *hôtel garni*, and forced to receive all comers—I, who you know lock myself up when I am ill as if I had the plague.

I wish I could fill my sheet, in return for your five pages. The only thing you will care for knowing is, that I never saw Mrs. Damer better in her life, nor look so well. You may trust me, who am so apt to be frightened about her.

1558. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

MADAM,

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 14, 1774.

'Methinks an Æsop's fable you relate,' as Dryden says in *The Hind and Panther*. A mouse that wraps itself in a French cloak and sleeps on a couch; and a goldfinch that taps at the window and swears it will come in to quadrille at eleven o'clock at night! no, no, these are none of Æsop's cattle; they are too fashionable to have lived so near the Creation. The mouse is neither country mouse nor city mouse; and whatever else he may be, the goldfinch must be a Maccaroni, or at least of the *Sçavoir vivre*¹. I do not deny but I have some skill in expounding types and portents; and could give a shrewd guess at the identical persons who have

⁴ Charles Stanhope (1753-1816), Viscount Mahon; succeeded his father as third Earl Stanhope in 1786. He was noted for his Republican views, and for his interest in

science.

⁵ Upon the death of Louis XV. *Walpole*.

LETTER 1558.—¹ A fashionable club.

travestied themselves into a quadruped and biped; but the truth is, I have no mind, Madam, to be Prime Minister. King Pharaoh is mighty apt on emergencies to send for us soothsayers, and put the whole kingdom into our hands, if his butler or baker, with whom he is wont to gossip, does but tell him of a cunning man.

I have no ambition to supplant Lord North—especially as the season approaches when I dread the gout; and I should be very sorry to be fetched out of my bed to pacify America. To be sure, Madam, you give me a fair field for uttering oracles: however, all I will unfold is, that the emblematic animals have no views on Lady Louisa². The omens of her fortune are in herself; and I will burn my books, if beauty, sense, and merit do not bestow all the happiness on her they prognosticate.

I can as little agree to the Duchess of M.'s solution of the Duchess of L.'s marriage, which, by the way, is at least not over yet. Nor do I believe, *whatever mamma knows*, that she will agree to it either; and, for this reason, the efficacy of pregnancy on a delicate constitution is no lasting nostrum. A husband would be but a temporary preservative, and useless, when the operations of the remedy could not possibly be of any service. Alas! is a poor sick lady to leave off the drug when it can no longer produce the wholesome tumour on the patient!

I doubt the Duchess of M. did not advert to the vicinity of that hopeless season in the Duchess of L., or I think her Grace would not have laid down a position from which such disagreeable consequences might be drawn.

I like the blue eyes, Madam, better than the denomination of Lady Gertrude Fitzpatrick, which, all respectable as it is,

² Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick (d. 1789), daughter of first Earl of Upper Ossory, and sister-in-law of Horace Walpole's correspondent; m. (1779), as his se-

cond wife, William Petty, second Earl of Shelburne, who was created Marquis of Lansdowne in 1784.

is very harsh and rough sounding ; pray let her change it with the first goldfinch that offers. Nay, I do not even trust to the blueness of the eyes. I do not believe they last once in twenty times. One cannot go into any village fifty miles from London without seeing a dozen little children with flaxen hair and eyes of sky-blue. What becomes of them all ? One does not see a grown Christian with them twice in a century, except in poetry.

The Strawberry Gazette is very barren of news. Mr. Garrick has the gout, which is of more consequence to the metropolis than to Twitnamshire. Lady Hertford dined here last Saturday, brought her loo party, and stayed supper ; there were Lady Mary Coke, Mrs. Howe, and the Colonels Maude and Keene. This was very heroic, for one is robbed every hundred yards. Lady Hertford herself was attacked last Wednesday on Hounslow Heath at three in the afternoon, but she had two servants on horseback, who would not let her be robbed, and the highwayman decamped.

The greatest event I know was a present I received last Sunday, just as I was going to dine at Lady Blandford's, to whom I sacrificed it. It was a bunch of grapes as big—as big—as that the two spies carried on a pole to Joshua ; for spies in those days, when they robbed a vineyard, were not at all afraid of being overtaken. In good truth this bunch weighed three pounds and a half, *côte rôtie* measure ; and was sent to me by my neighbour Prado, of the tribe of Issachar, who is descended from one of foresaid spies, but a good deal richer than his ancestor. Well, Madam, I carried it to the Marchioness, but gave it to the *maitre d'hôtel*, with injunctions to conceal it till the dessert. At the end of dinner, Lady Blandford said she had heard of three immense bunches of grapes at Mr. Prado's at a dinner he had made for Mr. Ellis. I said those things were always exaggerated. She cried, Oh ! but Mrs. Ellis told it, and it weighed I don't

know how many pounds, and the Duke of Argyle had been to see the hothouse, and she wondered, as it was so near, I would not go and see it. 'Not I, indeed,' said I; 'I dare to say there is no curiosity in it.' Just then entered the gigantic bunch. Everybody screamed. 'There,' said I, 'I will be shot if Mr. Prado has such a bunch as yours.' In short, she suspected Lady Egremont, and the adventure succeeded to admiration. If you will send the Bedfordshire waggon, Madam, I will beg a dozen grapes for you.

Mr. Barker may pretend what he will, but if he liked Strawberry Hill so well, he would have visited it again, and by daylight. He could see no more of it at nine o'clock at night than he does at this moment.

Pray, Madam, is not it Farming Woods's³ tide? Who is to have the care of the dear mouse in your absence? I wish I could spare Margaret, who loves all creatures so well that she would have been happy in the ark, and sorry when the Deluge ceased; unless people had come to see Noah's old house, which she would have liked still better than cramming his menagerie.

Postscript, *entre nous*. Have you heard that certain verses have been read inadvertently to the D. of Gr.⁴? I long to know, but cannot learn who was the ingenious person.

1559. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 16, 1774.

WHAT is the commonest thing in the world?—Lord! how can you be so dull as not to guess? why to be sure, to hunt for a thing forty times, and give it over, and then find it when you did not look for it, exactly where you had hunted forty times. This happened to me this very morning,

³ Lord Ossory's seat in Northamptonshire.

⁴ The Duke of Grafton, Lady Ossory's former husband.

and overjoyed I am. I suppose you don't guess what I have found? Really, Mr. Mason, you great poets are so absent, and so unlike the rest of the world! Why what should I have found, but the thing in the world that was most worth finding? a hidden treasure—a hidden fig; no, Sir, not the certificate of the Duchess of Kingston's first marriage, nor the lost books of Livy, nor the longitude, nor the philosopher's stone, nor all Charles Fox has lost. I tell you it is what I have searched for a thousand times, and had rather have found than the longitude, if it was a thousand times longer. Oh, you do guess, do you? I thought I never lost anything in my life. I was sure I had them, and so I had; and now am I not a good soul, to sit down and send you a copy incontinently? Don't be too much obliged to me neither. I am in a panic till there are more copies than mine, and as the post does not go till to-morrow, I am in terror lest the house should be burnt to-night. I have a mind to go and bury a transcript in the field; but then if I should be burnt too! nobody would know where to look for it. Well, here it is! I think your decorum will not hold it proper to be printed in the *Life*, nor would I have it. We will preserve copies, and the devil is in it, if some time or other it don't find its way to the press. My copy is in his own handwriting; but who could doubt it: I know but one man upon earth who could have written it but Gray¹.

1560. TO JOHN FENN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1774.

I AM much obliged to you, Sir, for your accurate drawing and description of your picture, and wish I could say any-

LETTER 1559. — ¹ The original letter ends with a copy of Gray's verses, *Jemmy Twitcher: or, the Cambridge Courtship*, and a suggestion that the coarseness of the last two

lines should be modified.

LETTER 1560. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. Arthur H. Frere.

thing satisfactory enough to ascertain whose portrait it is. You will forgive me if I suggest doubts that do not tend to corroborate your opinion; and you must excuse them, as I have never seen the picture itself.

By the general look and dress I should have concluded it drawn in the reign of Henry 8th, or at soonest of Henry 7th. The dress is extremely like those of the former's time, and at present I cannot recollect having seen any such even in the time of Edward 4th, when, and in Henry 6th's time, they seem to have worn loose robes, and especially not such close sleeves.

The red rose is a leading presumption that it represents some prince of the house of Lancaster, though perhaps it is no certain criterion. It was pretty common under Henry 8th to give a flower in the hand. Edward the Sixth is drawn with a pink. Still I am persuaded that during the reign of Edward 4th and Richard 3rd nobody would have cared to bear a *red* rose.

That the picture represents the Duke of Gloucester or Exeter I much question, as the distinction of the roses was certainly not adopted so early as the time of the latter, and I imagine not even in that of the former, nor till Richard Duke of York, father of Edward 4th, declared his pretensions. When the two roses were generally used as party distinctions they may have been borne by the partisans of each faction from zeal, and in that case the portrait would not necessarily exhibit a prince of Lancaster, but only a zealous adherent. This is mere conjecture. But I do think that, supposing it a Lancastrian prince, it is one that lived after the accession of Henry 7th, when the red rose was become a very courtly cognizance. For instance, it may represent John Viscount Wells, who was related to Henry 7th, and having married a daughter of Edward 4th might choose to mark his attachment to the red rose, for fear of being suspected in that

jealous time of being too partial to his wife's family. There is another person whom I think it still more likely to represent, which is Sir Charles Somerset¹, afterwards Earl of Worcester, of the bastard line as Harry 7th himself was, and ancestor of the Dukes of Beaufort. I know no man either in that reign or the subsequent so likely to have affected that royal badge, both as it flattered the King's and his own very scanty pretensions to blood royal.

If we suppose it, as I own the dress inclines me to think, of the reign of Henry 8th, I can find nobody whom it so probably exhibits as Edward Stafford, the last Duke of Buckingham, a true prince of the blood, and who aiming at the crown, and being also, by his grandmother² I think, descended from the Somersets, might affect the red rose, the only royal cognizance of which the Henrys were not jealous.

I could still hint at another person, supposing the picture painted in the reign of Henry 7th, who was very likely to give the cognizance of Lancaster; I mean, his uncle, Jasper Duke of Bedford.

In short, Sir, I fear we may multiply conjectures, and yet not ascertain the specific person intended, as there are only marks enough to furnish guesses, and we have not lights from that age sufficient to identify the person. I wish I could have given you better assistance; but I had rather leave obscurities in their darkness than, as most antiquaries do, pronounce rashly. Truth is the sole merit of most antiquities; and when we cannot discover the truth, what value is there in dogmatic error about things that have no intrinsic value?—and such were all our pictures before

¹ Natural son of Henry Somerset, third Duke of Beaufort, whose surname he assumed. He was created Earl of Worcester in 1514, and died in 1526.

² The grandmother of the Duke of Buckingham was Lady Joan Beaufort, the legitimated daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

Holbein, and infinitely the greater part of our pictures since!

Mr. Granger, I see by the papers, has published his Supplement. I have not yet received it. I am sorry his bookseller has quoted me for the list of unengraved portraits. It did not deserve such parade.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1561. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1774.

WHAT I am going to say to you you must manage with the greatest prudence, that is, with your usual discretion and good sense. I was this morning with your brother at Richmond. He made grievous complaints of your nephew. The chief points of resentment were these: first, that Sir Horace before he went abroad would take all his own affairs into his own hands, which before your brother conducted. I could not hold this so very unreasonable. Secondly, that he had taken away with him 900*l.* that your brother had paid him, and whatever else he could amass. No great crime in this. Lastly, that great bills came in from Sir Horace's annuitants and creditors, though there is no money to pay them. He thinks, continued your brother, that I will pay his bills, rather than let him be dishonoured, though he already owes me so much. I certainly will not let him be disgraced *abroad*, especially as that would bring him home—but I will not pay his annuitants here; that I am determined upon.

My dear Sir, it would be very impertinent in me to enter

LETTER 1561.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

into this affair, if my motive was not so very good. But obliged as I was to dear Gal, which I never do or can forget, loving him and you as I do, and with great affection to your nephew for your sakes and his own, for I was exceedingly pleased with his good sense and handsome behaviour to me last year, can I know what is of so much consequence to him as his uncle's anger, and not do everything upon earth in my power to prevent the worst consequences from it? What can I do so well as imparting it to you, your nephew's best friend? You will take the gentlest and fairest opportunities of warning him against offending your brother, who you know may not be quite sorry to have cause to be out of humour with him. In short, I need say no more. I leave your nephew's interests in the best hands, I hope; nay, I think he has too much sense not to see how much it is his own and the interest of his children to pay court to your brother. He must see that you have no interest but his to give this advice. You are as like your brother Gal in attachment to him as you are in everything else—and I hope you find he is like his father in affection to you. Take care your brother knows nothing of this, though it is a very honest secret to endeavour to make his nephew please him.

I have little or nothing else to say. I live chiefly here, out of the world, sick of its transactions, and parting with it silently and by degrees. Sorry from humanity for what I see, but as without power of remedying, without curiosity of knowing. The age seems to be growing as ferocious as it is abandoned; and though morality seldom prevented any excesses, I think all Europe is growing so like its Gothic ancestors, though without the plea certainly of being overpeopled, that to march with vast usurping armies is a sufficient reason for overrunning any neighbouring country. I allude to the Emperor's invasion of the state of Venice. I know nothing of it but from the public papers

—but why should I not believe it?—Poland bids me believe it, and this other reason; this bird of prey, this eagle with two beaks¹, said lately to young George Grenville, ‘As soon as the breath is out of my mother’s body, Europe will think me as great an incendiary as the King of Prussia.’—How decent to his mother! Does not she tremble? Do you wonder I think he has not patience to wait for that event? How sensible too to blab his intentions! And so the King of Prussia, like other monsters, has disciples already!

I tell you nothing of America, for you see in the papers as much as I know. Here the rage of elections is already begun; Lord Orford has happily saved me from having anything to do with them. It would have been the worst thorn his illness could have planted in my side. He has now taken to sailing, and lives three days and nights together upon the water. If his physicians had ordered him to be dipped in the sea, perhaps it would have been their best prescription.

You asked me lately why Mr. Conway was gone abroad. Certainly only to see armies, Prussian, Austrian, and French. The incendiaries, master and scholar, have both been very gracious to him. I had rather visit Etna and Vesuvius, who cannot help making earthquakes. This world is one great Alas! Most men suffer, yet all extol their chief plagues; yes, thanks to those dogs the litterati! Adieu!

P.S. I hope Tuscan Secretaries of State do not open letters. Bless me, I should be guilty of *laesae Majestatis* in half the courts of Europe!

2nd P.S. I just hear that your Anglo-Florentine Earl² is married at last, and to an Englishwoman, nay, and that he

¹ It is not at all certain that this anecdote, which Mr. W. had heard, was true; no more than a preceding one from the same quarter. *Walpole*.
² The third Earl Cowper. See p. 64.

is coming home. This is so odd, that I think it no proof of his being grown more reasonable.

1562. TO JOHN CRAUFURD.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 26, 1774.

You tell me to write to you, and I am certainly disposed to do anything I can to amuse you ; but that is not so easy a matter, for two very good reasons : you are not the most amusable of men, and I have nothing to amuse you with, for you are like electricity, you attract and repel at once ; and though you have at first a mind to know anything, you are tired of it before it can be told. I don't go to Almaack's nor amongst your acquaintance. Would you bear to hear of mine ? of Lady Blandford, Lady Anne Conolly, and the Duchess of Newcastle ? for by age and situation I live at this time of year with nothing but old women. They do very well for me who have little choice left, and who rather prefer common nonsense to wise nonsense—the only difference I know between old women and old men. I am out of all politics, and never think of elections, which I think I should hate even if I loved politics ; just as if I loved tapestry I do not think I could talk over the manufacture of worsteds. Books I have almost done with too ; at least, read only such as nobody else would read. In short, my way of life is too insipid to entertain anybody but myself, and though I am always employed, I must say I think I have given up everything in the world only to be at liberty to be very busy about the most arrant trifles.

Well ! I have made out half a letter with a history very like the journal in the *Spectator*, of the man, the chief incidents of whose life were stroking his cat, and walking to Hampstead. Last night, indeed, I had an adventure

LETTER 1562—Collated with original in possession of Mr. John W. Ford.

that would make a great figure in such a narrative. *You* may be enjoying bright suns and serene horizons under the Pole, but in this dismal southern region it has rained for this month without interruption. Lady Browne and I dined as usually on Sundays with Lady Blandford. Our gentle Thames was swelled in the morning to a very respectable magnitude, and we had thought of returning by Kew Bridge; however, I persuaded her to try if we could not ferry, and when we came to the foot of the hill, the bargemen told us the water was sunk. We embarked and had four men to push the ferry. The night was very dark, for though the moon was up, we could neither see her, nor she us. The bargemen were drunk, the poles would scarce reach the bottom, and in five minutes the rapidity of the current turned the barge round, and in an instant we were at Isleworth. The drunkenest of the men cried out, 'She is gone, she is lost!' meaning they had lost the management. Lady Browne fell into an agony, began screaming and praying to Jesus, and every land and water god and goddess, and I, who expected not to stop till we should run against Kew Bridge, was contriving how I should get home; or what was worse, whether I must not step into some mud up to my middle, be wet through, and get the gout. With much ado they recovered the barge and turned it; but then we ran against the piles of the new bridge, which startled the horses, who began kicking. My Phillis's terrors increased, and I thought every minute she would have begun confession. Thank you, you need not be uneasy; in ten minutes we landed very safely, and if we had been drowned, I am too exact not to have dated my letter from the bottom of the Thames. There! there's a letter; I think you would not want to read such another, even if written to somebody else.

Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. Pontdeyvelde is dead, and our friend¹ fancies she is more sorry than she fancied she should be: but it will make a vacuum in her room rather than in her entertainment.

Arlington Street, Sept. 29.

This letter, which should have gone two days ago, but I had no direction, will come untimely, for you will be up to the ears in your canvass², as the Parliament is to be dissolved the day after to-morrow.

1563. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 27, 1774.

I SHOULD be very ungrateful indeed if I thought of complaining of you, who are goodness itself to me: and when I did not receive letters from you, I concluded it happened from your eccentric positions. I am amazed that, hurried as you have been, and your eyes and thoughts crowded with objects, you have been able to find time to write me so many and such long letters, over and above all those to Lady Ailesbury, your daughter¹, brother, and other friends. Even Lord Strafford brags of your frequent remembrance. That your superabundance of royal beams would dazzle you, I never suspected. Even I enjoy for you the distinctions you have received—though I should hate such things for myself, as they are particularly troublesome to me, and I am particularly awkward under them, and as I abhor the King of Prussia, and, if I passed

¹ Madame du Deffand, who on Sept. 4, 1774, wrote to Horace Walpole on Pontdeveyle's death as follows:—'Je fais une très-grande perte; une connaissance de cinquante-cinq ans, qui était devenue une liaison intime, est irréparable. Qu'est-ce que sont celles que l'on forme à mon âge? Mais il est

inutile de se plaindre, il faut savoir supporter toutes les situations où l'on se trouve, et se dire que l'on pourrait être encore plus malheureux.'

² Craufurd was elected for Renfrewshire on Oct. 24, 1774.

LETTER 1563.—¹ Hon. Mrs. Damer.

through Berlin, should have no joy like avoiding him—like one of our countrymen, who changed horses at Paris, and asked what the name of that town was. All the other civilities you have received I am perfectly happy in. The Germans are certainly a civil, well-meaning people, and, I believe, one of the least corrupted nations in Europe. I don't think them very agreeable; but who do I think are so? A great many Frenchwomen, some Englishmen, and a few Englishwomen; exceedingly few Frenchmen. Italian women are the grossest, vulgarest of the sex. If an Italian man has a grain of sense, he is a buffoon. So much for Europe!

I have already told you, and so must Lady Ailesbury, that my courage fails me, and I dare not meet you at Paris. As the period is arrived when the gout used to come, it is never a moment out of my head. Such a suffering, such a helpless condition as I was in for five months and a half, two years ago, makes me tremble from head to foot. I should die at once if seized in a French inn; or what, if possible, would be worse, at Paris, where I must admit everybody—I, who you know can hardly bear to see even you when I am ill, and who shut up myself here, and would not let Lord and Lady Hertford come near me—I, who have my room washed though in bed, how could I bear French dirt? In short, I, who am so capricious, and whom you are pleased to call a philosopher, I suppose because I have given up everything but my own will—how could I keep my temper, who have no way of keeping my temper but by keeping it out of everybody's way! No, I must give up the satisfaction of being with you at Paris. I have just learnt to give up my pleasures, but I cannot give up my pains, which such selfish people as I, who have suffered much, grow to compose into a system that they are partial to, because it is their own. I must make myself

amends when you return: you will be more stationary, I hope, for the future; and if I live I shall have intervals of health. In lieu of me, you will have a charming succedaneum, Lady Harriet Stanhope. Her father², who is more a hero than I, is packing up his decrepit bones, and goes too. I wish she may not have him to nurse, instead of diverting herself.

The present state of your country is that it is drowned and dead drunk; all water without, and wine within. Opposition for the next elections everywhere, even in Scotland; not from party, but as laying out money to advantage. In the head quarters, indeed, party is not out of the question: the day after to-morrow will be a great bustle in the City for a Lord Mayor³, and all the winter in Westminster, where Lord Mahon and Humphrey Cotes oppose the court. Lady Powis is saving her money at Ludlow and Powis Castles by keeping open house day and night against Sir Watkin Williams, and fears she shall be kept there till the general election. It has rained this whole month, and we have got another inundation. The Thames is as broad as your Danube, and all my meadows are under water. Lady Browne and I, coming last Sunday night from Lady Blandford's, were in a piteous plight. The ferry-boat was turned round by the current, and carried to Isleworth. Then we ran against the piers of our new bridge, and the horses were frightened. Luckily, my *cicisbeo* was a Catholic, and screamed to so many saints, that some of them at the nearest ale-house came and saved us, or I should have had no more gout, or what I dreaded I should; for I concluded we should be carried ashore somewhere, and be forced to wade through the mud up to my middle. So you see one may wrap oneself up in

² The Earl of Harrington.

³ When Mr. Wilkes was elected. *Walpole.*

flannel and be in danger, without visiting all the armies on the face of the globe, and putting the immortality of one's chaise to the proof.

I am ashamed of sending you but three sides of smaller paper in answer to seven large—but what can I do? I see nothing, know nothing, do nothing. My castle is finished, I have nothing new to read, I am tired of writing, I have no new or old bit for my printer. I have only black hoods around me; or, if I go to town, the family party in Grosvenor Street⁴. One trait will give you a sample of how I pass my time, and made me laugh, as it put me in mind of you; at least it was a fit of absence, much more likely to have happened to you than to me. I was playing at eighteenpenny tredrille with the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Browne, and certainly not much interested in the game. I cannot recollect nor conceive what I was thinking of, but I pushed the cards very gravely to the Duchess, and said, '*Doctor, you are to deal.*' You may guess at their astonishment, and how much it made us all laugh. I wish it may make you smile a moment, or that I had anything better to send you. Adieu.

Most affectionately yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1564. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 28, 1774.

LADY AILESURY brings you this¹, which is not a letter, but a paper of directions, and the counterpart of what I have written to Madame du Deffand. I beg of you seriously to take a great deal of notice of this dear old friend of mine. She will, perhaps, expect more attention from *you*, as my

⁴ Lord Hertford's.

LETTER 1564.—¹ Mr. Conway ended his military tour at Paris, whither

Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer went to meet him, and where they spent the winter together. *Walpole.*

friend, and as it is her own nature a little, than will be quite convenient to you: but you have an infinite deal of patience and good nature, and will excuse it. I was afraid of her importuning Lady Ailesbury, who has a vast deal to see and do, and, therefore, I have prepared Madame du Deffand, and told her Lady Ailesbury loves amusements, and that, having never been at Paris before, she must not confine her: so you must pay for both—and it will answer: and I do not, I own, ask this only for Madame du Deffand's sake, but for my own, and a little for yours. Since the late King's death she has not dared to write to me freely, and I want to know the present state of France exactly, both to satisfy my own curiosity, and for her sake, as I wish to learn whether her pension, &c., is in any danger from the present ministry, some of whom are not her friends. She can tell you a great deal if she will—by that I don't mean that she is reserved, or partial to her own country against ours—quite the contrary; she loves me better than all France together—but she hates politics: and therefore, to make her talk on it, you must tell her it is to satisfy me, and that I want to know whether she is well at court, whether she has any fears from the government, particularly from Maurepas and Nivernois: and that I am eager to have Monsieur de Choiseul and *ma grand'maman*, the Duchess, restored to power. If you take it on this foot easily, she will talk to you with the utmost frankness and with amazing cleverness. I have told her you are strangely absent, and that, if she does not repeat it over and over, you will forget every syllable: so I have prepared her to joke and be quite familiar with you at once. She knows more of personal characters, and paints them better, than anybody: but let this be between ourselves, for I would not have a living soul suspect that I get any intelligence from her, which would hurt her; and, therefore, I beg you not to let any human being know of this

letter, nor of your conversations with her, neither English nor French.

Madame du Deffand hates *les philosophes*; so you must give them up to her. She and Madame Geoffrin are no friends: so, if you go thither, don't tell her of it. Indeed you would be sick of that house, whither all the pretended *beaux esprits* and *faux savants* go, and where they are very impertinent and dogmatic.

Let me give you one other caution, which I shall give Lady Ailesbury too. Take care of your papers at Paris, and have a very strong lock to your *portefeuille*. In the *hôtels garnis* they have double keys to every lock, and examine every drawer and paper of the English they can get at. They will pilfer, too, whatever they can. I was robbed of half my clothes there the first time, and they wanted to hang poor Louis to save the people of the house who had stolen the things.

Here is another thing I must say. Madame du Deffand has kept a great many of my letters, and, as she is very old, I am in pain about them. I have written to her to beg she will deliver them up to you to bring back to me, and I trust she will. If she does, be so good to take great care of them. If she does not mention them, tell her just before you come away, that I begged you to bring them; and if she hesitates, convince her how it would hurt me to have letters written in very bad French, and mentioning several people, both French and English, fall into bad hands, and, perhaps, be printed.

Let me desire you to read this letter more than once, that you may not forget my requests, which are very important to me; and I must give you one other caution, without which all would be useless. There is at Paris a Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse², a pretended *bel esprit*, who was formerly an

² Julie Jeanne Éléonore de l'Espinasse (1732-1776), natural daughter

of the Comtesse d'Albon, whose legitimate daughter was sister-in-law

humble companion of Madame du Deffand; and betrayed her and used her very ill. I beg of you not to let anybody carry you thither. It would disoblige my friend of all things in the world, and she would never tell you a syllable; and I own it would hurt me, who have such infinite obligations to her, that I should be very unhappy, if a particular friend of mine showed her this disregard. She has done everything upon earth to please and serve me, and I owe it to her to be earnest about this attention. Pray do not mention it; it might look simple in me, and yet I owe it to her, as I know it would hurt her: and, at her age, with her misfortunes, and with infinite obligations on my side, can I do too much to show my gratitude, or prevent her any new mortification? I dwell upon it, because she has some enemies so spiteful that they try to carry all English to Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse.

I wish the Duchess of Choiseul may come to Paris while you are there; but I fear she will not; you would like her of all things. She has more sense and more virtues than almost any human being. If you choose to see any of the *savans*, let me recommend Monsieur Buffon. He has not only much more sense than any of them, but is an excellent old man, humane, gentle, well-bred, and with none of the arrogant pertness of all the rest. If he is at Paris, you will see a good deal of the Comte de Broglie at Madame du Deffand's. He is not a genius of the first water, but lively and sometimes agreeable. The court, I fear, will be at Fontainebleau, which will prevent your seeing many, unless you go thither. Adieu! at Paris! I leave the rest of my

of Madame du Deffand. Mlle. de l'Espinasse was for ten years companion to Madame du Deffand. In 1763 the latter found out that her companion secretly held a *salon* in her own room, where her friends

were accustomed to assemble before Madame du Deffand was ready to receive them. In consequence of this discovery Mlle. de l'Espinasse was dismissed.

paper for England, if I happen to have anything particular to tell you.

1565. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 6, 1774.

It would be unlike my attention and punctuality to see so large an event as an irregular dissolution of Parliament, without taking any notice of it to you. It happened last Saturday, six months before its natural death, and without the design being known but the Tuesday before, and that by very few persons. The chief motive is supposed to be the ugly state of North America, and the effects that a cross winter might have on the next elections. Whatever were the causes, the first consequences, as you may guess, were such a ferment in London as is seldom seen at this dead season of the year. Couriers, dispatches, post-chaises, post-horses, hurrying every way! Sixty messengers passed through one single turnpike on Friday. The whole island is by this time in equal agitation; but less wine and money will be shed than have been at any such period for these fifty years.

We have a new famous bill, devised by the late Mr. Grenville, that has its first operation now; and what changes it may occasion, nobody can yet foresee. The first symptoms are not favourable to the court; the great towns are casting off submission, and declaring for popular members. London, Westminster, Middlesex, seem to have no monarch but Wilkes, who is at the same time pushing for the mayoralty of London, with hitherto a majority on the poll. It is strange how this man, like a phoenix, always revives from his embers! America, I doubt, is still more unpromising. There are whispers of their having assembled an armed force, and of earnest supplications arrived for succours of men and ships. A civil war is no trifle; and

how we are to suppress or pursue it in such a vast region, with a handful of men, I am not an Alexander to guess; and for the fleet, can we put it upon casters and wheel it from Hudson's Bay to Florida? But I am an ignorant soul, and neither pretend to knowledge nor foreknowledge. All I perceive already is that our Parliaments are subjected to America and India, and must be influenced by their politics; yet I do not believe our senators are more universal than formerly.

They say I was too precipitate in believing Lord Cowper's match, yet most people think it is to be: a matter of perfect indifference to me; I only mentioned it as a subject we could both talk on: we have not many such. I saw the Duchess of Beaufort t'other night, who is warm in your praises. She is returned with an air of youth.

It would be quite unfashionable to talk longer of anything but elections; and yet it is the topic on which I never talk or think, especially since *I took up my freedom*¹. In one light I can speak of them. The whole world has been so good for these six months as to believe my nephew quite in his senses. It was very far from being *my* opinion. You shall judge yourself. Lady Orford had given him power over her boroughs. The moment Mr. Sharpe, her agent, heard of the dissolution, he sent two expresses, one after the other, to my Lord. He has not deigned to send any answer or give any orders, except dispatching Mr. Skreene² to one of them. Mr. Boone³, his candidate for the other, is in bed with the gout; and though there is a clear majority of three voices at one, Mr. Sharpe thinks he will lose both by his improvidence. I had taken measures to secure both. As everybody is as mad to

LETTER 1565.—¹ His quitting Parliament. *Walpole*.

² William Skrine, returned for

Callington on Oct. 13, 1774.

³ Charles Boone, returned for Ashburton on Oct. 11, 1774.

secure boroughs, as my Lord is in neglecting, I fancy they will allow now that his intellects are not quite so sound as they imagined. If Lady Orford asks you any questions, you may mention the state of the case in gentle terms; Mr. Sharpe, I conclude, will be more narrative.

In the midst of this combustion, we are in perils by land and water. It has rained for this month without intermission; there is a sea between me and Richmond, and Sunday was se'nnight I was hurried down to Isleworth in the ferry-boat by the violence of the current, and had great difficulty to get to shore. Our roads are so infested by highwaymen, that it is dangerous stirring out almost by day. Lady Hertford was attacked on Hounslow Heath at three in the afternoon. Dr. Eliot was shot at three days ago, without having resisted; and the day before yesterday we were near losing our Prime Minister, Lord North; the robbers shot at the postillion, and wounded the latter. In short, all the freebooters, that are not in India, have taken to the highway. The Ladies of the Bed-chamber dare not go to the Queen at Kew in an evening. The lane between me and the Thames is the only safe road I know at present, for it is up to the middle of the horses in water. Next week I shall not venture to London even at noon, for the Middlesex election is to be at Brentford, where the two demagogues, Wilkes and Townshend, oppose each other; and at Richmond there is no crossing the river. How strange all this must appear to you Florentines; but you may turn to your Machiavel and Guicciardin, and have some idea of it. I am the quietest man at present in the whole island; not but I might take some part, if I would. I was in my garden yesterday, seeing my servants lop some trees; my brewer walked in and pressed me to go to Guildhall for the nomination of members for the county. I replied, calmly, 'Sir, when

I would go no more to my own election, you may be very sure I will go to that of nobody else.' My old tune is,

Suave mari magno turbantibus acquora ventis, &c.

Adieu !

P.S. Arlington Street, 7th.

I am just come to town, and find your letter, with the notification of Lord Cowper's marriage⁴; I recollect that I ought to be sorry for it, as you will probably lose an old friend. The approaching death of the Pope⁵ will be an event of no consequence. That old mummery is near its conclusion, at least as a political object. The history of the latter Popes will be no more read than that of the last Constantinopolitan Emperors. Wilkes is a more conspicuous personage in modern story than the Pontifex Maximus of Rome. The poll for Lord Mayor ended last night; he and his late mayor had above 1,900 votes, and their antagonists not 1,500. It is strange that the more he is opposed, the more he succeeds !

I don't know whether Sir W. Duncan's marriage proved Platonic or not; but I cannot believe that a lady of great birth⁶, and greater pride, quarrels with her family, to marry a Scotch physician for Platonic love, which she might enjoy without marriage. I remember an admirable *bon mot* of George Selwyn; who said, 'How often Lady Mary will repeat, with Macbeth, "Wake Duncan with thy knocking—would thou couldst!"'

⁴ The third Earl Cowper married at Florence on June 2, 1775, Anne, daughter of Charles Gore, of Horkestowe, Lincolnshire.

⁵ Clement XIV.

⁶ Lady Mary Tufton, sister of the Earl of Thanet. *Walpole*.

1566. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

DEAR SIR,

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 11, 1774.

I answer yours immediately, as one pays a shilling to clench a bargain, when one suspects the seller. I accept your visit in the last week of this month, and will prosecute you if you do not execute.

I have nothing to say about elections, but that I congratulate myself every time I feel I have nothing to do with them. By my nephew's strange conduct about his boroughs, and by many other reasons, I doubt whether he is so well as he seemed to Dr. Bernardiston—it is a subject I do not love to talk on, but I know I tremble every time the bell rings at my gate at an unusual hour.

Have you seen Mr. Granger's Supplement¹? Methinks it grows too diffuse. I have hinted to him that fewer panegyrics from funeral sermons would not hurt it. Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. W.

1567. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

I HAVE not imitated your silence from irony, but convenience,—not from want of forgiveness, but of matter. In a time of general elections I have no more ideas than in Newmarket season, when everybody is talking of matches and bets. I do not know who has been distanced, or thrown, or won a cup. I have only observed in the papers, that Lord John has been hard run, though he has got the plate¹; and as the race was at York, I suppose you was on the course. The new senate, they tell me, will be a curious

LETTER 1566.—¹ To his *Biographical History*.

Notes and Queries, April 14, 1900.)

LETTER 1567.—Misplaced by C. amongst letters of Sept. 1774. (See

¹ Lord John Cavendish was returned as member for the City of York on Oct. 10, 1774.

assemblage of patricians and plebeians and knights—of the post. An *old-clothesman*, who, George Selwyn says, certainly stood for *Monmouth*, was a candidate, but unsuccessful. Bob², formerly a waiter at White's, was set up by my nephew for two boroughs, and actually is returned for Castle Rising with Mr. Wedderburn;

Servus curru portatur eodem;

which I suppose will offend the Scottish consul, as much as his countrymen resent an Irishman³ standing for Westminster, which the former reckon a borough of their own. For my part, waiter for waiter, I see little difference; they are all equally ready to cry, 'Coming, coming. Sir.'

I have heard nothing but what you tell me of Johnson's detection⁴, nor shall believe it till I see it. I have been likewise told that Macpherson is to publish the papers of James II, and detect Sir John Dalrymple. *Credat Judæus!* Is that house so divided against itself? I should have as soon believed Lord Mansfield had been to Paris for materials to prove the Assassination Plot. Really, Mr. Mason, you people who live in the country are strangely credulous! We are ignorant enough at Twickenham, *mais point jusqu'à ce point-là*.

Your Life may as well have patience a little longer still. If it comes out in the midst of contested elections, flatter yourself as much as you will, no soul will read it. Alas, Sir! the history of a dead poet will make no more impression now than the battle of Agincourt. If you can tell us any news of the assembly of the colonies, we shall listen to you with avidity. If you have any private intelligence that Boston is levelled to the ground, and sown with salt, better

² Robert Macreth, afterwards knighted.

³ Hervey Redmond Morres (d. 1797), second Viscount Mountmorres.

⁴ An expression of disbelief in the genuineness of Ossian in Johnson's *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*, published in 1775.

and better ; but, dear Sir, Mr. Gray never set his foot in the Massachusetts. He and Pindar might sing very pretty catches for aught we know, but nobody cares about such things nowadays. You lose your time, indeed you do. The *belles lettres* were in fashion once, and so were fardingales. But this is a grave nation, and soon grows weary of trifles. For one while we were mad about commerce, but that bubble is over too. We have at last found out that fleets do more good by destroying trade than by protecting it ; for if we have no trade, we are not vulnerable by an enemy. Spain enjoys Peru and Mexico by extirpating the inhabitants. She found that her natives migrated thither. What did she do ? Laid waste the New World ; and the Spaniards stayed at home—to be sure ; and we are going to be as wise. I wish you would turn your mind to these things as I do. There is some good in fathoming the arcana of Government, but poetry and writing lives is an occupation only fit for a schoolboy,—

*Non sic fortis Etruria crevit,
Scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma.*

No, she conquered the world and plundered her provinces, and then was blest with those demigods, Caligula, Domitian, and Heliogabalus, who were always sent to heaven as soon as they were ripe for it. Adieu !

1568. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 15, 1774.

WHY, Madam, you are a Proteus in petticoats, and every day appear in some new character ! Three days ago you was setting out ambassadress to Spain : to-day you are agent for Mr. Ongley¹, and carrying a county election.

LETTER 1568.—¹ Robert Henley-Ongley, M.P. for Bedfordshire ; cr. (July 30, 1776) Baron Ongley, of Old Warden in Ireland ; d. 1785.

Next week I suppose you will set out for Rome and make a Pope. I am sorry to put you in mind of an old observation, that they who attempt everything seldom are at the head of anything. You will not be the most conspicuous of ambassadresses, unless you go in your own right, as the Maréchale de Guébriant was sent to Poland without her husband. You will not be the first of electresses, unless you sit on the hustings like the Duchess of Northumberland. As to going to Madrid without Lord Ossory, you would not dislike it, if it was only to disappoint me of a son and heir; but let me see you in the porch of Bedford church, clapping Tom and Jack on the back, and tossing up a diamond cap in a huzza! Seriously, I should be very unhappy if I believed in your embassy, but as *we were assured of it on creditable authority* I was very little frightened, besides some private reasons of my own for doubting. It was not from your Ladyship's silence. The *corps diplomatique*, I know, keep secrets even after they have been in the *Gazette*, and were I impertinent enough to ask the question, to be sure you would answer like the Tuscan Envoy on Cromwell's death, 'Some say we are to go to Spain, some say we are not; for my part, I believe neither one nor t'other.'

You ask me, Madam, what *I* am doing? As I have no public character nor am tied to any mystery, I can answer very explicitly, what I generally am doing, laughing at everybody else. I have escaped the two things I hate and dread the most, Parliament and the gout; the first, as I told you in my last, might have happened *now*, in spite of my teeth, if my nephew had continued as bad as he was; the last I feared I should have had before this time, but *my reckoning was out last night*, and I have now great confidence in the bootikins for keeping it off.

I sing *Io Paeon* to Apollo, as god of medicine, for putting

off both my nephew's fit and mine, and give a loose to my spirits by diverting myself with all you who are over head and ears in elections, while I am enjoying the sunshine of October, and see even the horse-chestnuts in full leaf; but I beg your Ladyship's pardon, what care you what a man does who has not a freehold in the world?

What an insignificant being! and the old fool pretends to be happy! I own it is very insolent at fifty-eight to be even contented; but what can I do, Madam? If I had any misfortunes, I should consider how short a time they could last; and the gout itself, about which I own I am no stoic, must be cured, or deliver me for ever. Not that I am like poor Lord Holland, and wish to die. I like life extremely, if I hold it on no worse terms. I am not likely to play the fool myself, and one may trust that there are enough that will, to keep one in diversion. It is all the ill-will I have to the world; and as I have too much sense to think of curing anybody, I hope it is a very innocent amusement to sit in my own room and smile,—I mean for anybody but a Spanish ambassadress. What difficulty I should have, if I lived to your return, to compose my face to becoming gravity; and if I heard you ring and order your majordomo to call Lady Anne's duenna! I would try to behave as properly as if you made me

Your Excellency's, &c., &c.,

THE GOVERNOR OF BARATARIA.

1569. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, Oct. 16, 1774.

I RECEIVED this morning your letter of the 6th from Strasburg; and before you get this you will have had three from me by Lady Ailesbury. One of them should have reached you much sooner; but Lady Ailesbury kept it,

not being sure where you was. It was in answer to one in which you told me an anecdote, which in this last you ask if I had received.

Your letters are always so welcome to me, that you certainly have no occasion for excusing what you say or do not say. Your details amuse me, and so would what you suppress; for, though I have no military genius or curiosity, whatever relates to yourself must interest me. The honours you have received, though I have so little taste for such things myself, gave me great satisfaction; and I do not know whether there is not more pleasure in *not* being a prophet in one's own country, when one is almost received like Mahomet in every other. To be an idol at home is no assured touchstone of merit. Stocks and stones have been adored in fifty regions, but do not bear transplanting. The Apollo Belvidere and the Hercules Farnese may lose their temples, but never lose their estimation, by travelling.

Elections, you may be sure, are the only topic here at present—I mean in England—not on this quiet hill, where I think of them as little as of the spot where the battle of Blenheim was fought. They say there will not be much alteration, but the Phoenix will rise from its ashes with most of its old plumes, or as bright. Wilkes at first seemed to carry all before him, besides having obtained the mayoralty of London at last. Lady Hertford told me last Sunday that he would carry twelve members. I have not been in town since, nor know anything but what I collect from the papers; so, if my letter is opened, M. de Vergennes¹ will not amass any very authentic intelligence from my *dispatches*.

What I have taken notice of is as follows: for the City Wilkes will have but three members: he will lose Crosby,

LETTER 1569.—¹ The Comte de Vergennes, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

and Townsend will carry Oliver. In Westminster, Wilkes will not have one; his Humphrey Cotes is by far the lowest on the poll; Lord Percy and Lord T. Clinton are triumphant there. Her Grace of Northumberland sits at a window in Covent Garden, harangues the mob, and is 'Hail, fellow, well met!' At Dover, Wilkes has carried one, and probably will come in for Middlesex² himself with Glynn. There have been great endeavours to oppose him, but to no purpose. Of this I am glad, for I do not love a mob so near as Brentford; especially as my road lies through it. Where he has any other interest I am too ignorant in these matters to tell you. Lord John Cavendish is opposed at York, and at the beginning of the poll had the fewest numbers. Charles Fox, like the Ghost in *Hamlet*, has shifted to many quarters; but in most the cock crew, and he walked off³. In Southwark there has been outrageous rioting; but I neither know the candidates⁴, their connections, nor success. This, perhaps, will appear a great deal of news at Paris: here, I dare to say, my butcher knows more.

I can tell you still less of America. There are two or three more ships with forces going thither, and Sir William Draper as second in command.

Of private news, except that Dyson has had a stroke of palsy and will die⁵, there is certainly none; for I saw that shrill Morning Post, Lady Greenwich, two hours ago, and she did not know a paragraph.

I forgot to mention to you M. de Maurepas. He was by far the ablest and most agreeable man I knew at Paris: and if you stay, I think I could take the liberty of giving you a letter to him; though, as he is now so great a man,

² Wilkes was returned for Middlesex on Oct. 20, 1774.

³ He was returned for Malmesbury.

⁴ The members elected were Nathaniel Polhill and Henry Thrale.

⁵ Dyson lived till 1776.

and I remain so little an one, I don't know whether it would be quite so proper—though he was exceedingly good to me, and pressed me often to make him a visit in the country. But Lord Stormont⁶ can certainly carry you to him—a better passport.

There was one of my letters on which I wish to hear from you. There are always English coming from Paris, who would bring such a parcel: at least, you might send me one volume at a time, and the rest afterwards: but I should not care to have them ventured by the common conveyance. Madame du Deffand is negotiating for an enamel picture⁷ for me; but, if she obtains it, I had rather wait for it till you come. The books I mean are those I told you Lady Ailesbury and Mrs. Damer would give you a particular account of, for they know my mind exactly. Don't reproach me with not meeting you at Paris. Recollect what I suffered this time two years; and, if you can have any notion of fear, imagine my dread of torture for five months and a half! When all the quiet of Strawberry did but just carry me through it, could I support it in the noise of a French hotel! and, what would be still worse, exposed to receive all visits? for the French, you know, are never more in public than in the act of death. I am like animals, and love to hide myself *when I am dying*. Thank God, I am now two days beyond the crisis when I expected my dreadful periodic visitant, and begin to grow very sanguine about the virtue of the bootikins. I shall even have courage to go to-morrow to Chalfont for two days, as it is but a journey of two hours. I would not be a day's

⁶ English Ambassador in Paris.

⁷ 'J'oubliais de vous dire que Mariette est mort; je me suis déjà informée (mais sans succès) où l'on pourrait trouver ses héritiers; si je l'apprends, désirez-vous que je fasse demander s'ils consentiraient à

vendre ce portrait en émail, par Petitot, de Madame d'Olonne? En ce cas, il faut me dire quel prix vous y voulez mettre.' (Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole, Sept. 20, 1774.)

journey from hence for all Lord Clive's diamonds. This will satisfy *you*. I doubt Madame du Deffand is not so easily convinced: therefore, pray do not drop a hint before her of blaming me for not meeting you; rather assure her you are persuaded it would have been too great a risk for me at this season. I wish to have her quite clear of my attachment to her; but that I do not always find so easy. You, I am sure, will find her all zeal and *empressement* for you and yours. Adieu!

1570. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 22, 1774.

THOUGH I have been writing two letters, of four sides each, one of which I enclose, I must answer your two last, if my fingers will move; and talk to you on the contents of the enclosed.

If the Jesuits have precipitated the Pope's death¹, as seems more than probable, they have acted more by the spirit of their order, than by its good sense. Great crimes may raise a growing cause, but seldom retard the fall of a sinking one. This I take to be almost an infallible maxim. Great crimes, too, provoke more than they terrify; and there is no poisoning all that are provoked, and all that are terrified; who alternately provoke and terrify each other, till common danger produces common security. The Bourbon monarchs will be both angry and frightened, the Cardinals frightened. It will be the interest of both not to revive an order that bullies with arsenic in its sleeve. The poisoned host will destroy the Jesuits, as well as the Pope: and perhaps the Church of Rome will fall by a wafer, as it rose by it; for such an edifice will tumble when once the crack has begun.

LETTER 1570.—¹ Benedict XIV, Ganganelli. *Walpole*.—Not Benedict, but Clement, XIV.

Our elections are almost over. Wilkes has taken possession of Middlesex without an enemy appearing against him ; and, being as puissant a monarch as Henry the Eighth, and as little scrupulous, should, like him, date his acts *From our Palace of Bridewell, in the tenth year of our reign.* He has, however, met with a heroine to stem the tide of his conquests ; who, though not of Arc, nor a *pucelle*, is a true *Joan* in spirit, style, and manners. This is her Grace of Northumberland², who has carried the mob of Westminster from him ; sitting daily in the midst of Covent Garden ; and will elect her son³ and Lord Thomas Clinton⁴, against Wilkes's two candidates, Lord Mahon⁵ and Lord Mountmorris. She puts me in mind of what Charles the Second said of a foolish preacher, who was very popular in his parish : 'I suppose his nonsense suits their nonsense.'

Elections naturally bring me to the subject of the enclosed, which you must read, seal, and deliver to Lady O. You will see how her distrust of me, and what she thought cunning, has fallen on herself. I have not told her so, because I would not make mischief, but her agent Sharpe has been still more to blame. When she pretended to approve all I said, but would not do anything I advised, on the contrary promised one of her seats to Sir William Hamilton, and offered another to Sharpe for his nephew, he on his side was wishing to sell both, but I prevented it ; which he took so ill, that he would not assist me in preventing her son from letting a farm on her jointure to a jockey, nor would even send me an answer. Now all their ingenuity has fallen on themselves ; he, after a silence of many months, has sent me a letter lamenting my Lord's conduct—I suppose meaning to lay the blame on me, who would have hindered it, if he and his mistress had

² Lady Elizabeth Seymour. *Walpole.*

³ Earl Percy. *Walpole.*

⁴ Second son of Henry, Duke of

Newcastle. *Walpole.*

⁵ Only son of Earl Stanhope. *Walpole.*

not prevented my meddling. I have very plainly, though in very civil terms, told him my mind. I have not told it to her on him, and have only hinted at her own misjudged address—cunning people always blunder by supposing nobody has any sense but themselves. I have, however, given her very good advice, which she will not take. I cannot help it; it was right for me to give it.

I have told her too my resolution of never undertaking the burden again. I have had plenty of reasons, and few thanks for all I did and suffered—but in one word, I could now do no good. The boroughs are gone, and the farms are let. He is frantic in his conduct, and cunning in his behaviour; I will give you a strong instance of both; Macreth is evidence of the first; and of the second, his excusing himself by saying he supposes Macreth⁶ had lent his mother money. Do not tell her this. I have concealed from her, too, that Macreth is not to expect to be repaid till her death. One must make the best of everything, but it is shocking to see the worst.

Let me sweeten my letter by making you smile. A Quaker has been at Versailles; and wanted to see the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois dine in public, but would not submit to pull off his hat. The Princes were told of it; and not only admitted him with his beaver on, but made him sit down and dine with them. Was not it very sensible and good-humoured? You and I know one who would not have been so gracious: I do not mean my nephew Lord Cholmondeley⁷. Adieu! I am tired to death.

P.S. I have seen the Duchess of Beaufort⁸; who sings

⁶ Robert Macreth. He had been a waiter at White's. Lord Orford, having borrowed money of him, brought him into Parliament for his borough of Castle Rising; and, to excuse it, pretended that his mother,

Lady Orford, who knew nothing of it, had borrowed the money. *Walpole*.

⁷ He means the Duke of Gloucester. *Walpole*.

⁸ Elizabeth, daughter of John Berkeley, of Stoke Gifford, Gloucestershire.

your praises quite in a tune I like. Her manner is much unpinioned to what it was, though her person remains as stately as ever; and powder is vastly preferable to those brown hairs, of whose preservation she was so fond. I am not so struck with the beauty of Lady Mary⁹ as I was three years ago. Your nephew, Sir Horace, I see by the papers, is come into Parliament¹⁰: I am glad of it. Is not he yet arrived at Florence?

Pray deliver my letter instead of sending it. I should like to know her first sensations on reading it, before she has time to determine how she will feel upon it.

1571. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 27, 1774.

Don't be angry, dear lady! I did not mean any offence to your conjugal zeal. I always knew you could fill any part you please, and could carry a county election as easy as a prize at a ball. When I compared you to the Duchess of Charing Cross, as the newspapers call her, was it possible you should think I saw any resemblance? If *you* took it for a sneer, *she* must have taken it for a compliment, which I doubt she would not do. Your troubles, I hope, are over and crowned with victory; mine are so, if you do not go to Madrid.

I know nothing, for I will not know the only thing that is to be known, elections. I am very ignorant who is chosen for my Lord Orford's boroughs. As he is so perfectly in his senses, I suppose he has brought in some men of quality or great speakers, or that some minister has recommended to

tershire; m. (1740) Lord Charles Noel Somerset, who succeeded his brother as fourth Duke of Beaufort in 1746.

⁹ Lady Mary Somerset, youngest

daughter of Charles Noel, Duke of Beaufort. She was afterwards married to the Duke of Rutland. *Walpole*.

¹⁰ As member for Maidstone.

him an intimate friend, who will give *credit* to the recommender, and be useful to my Lord himself. Had he remained out of order, somebody or other might have taken advantage of his weakness, and imposed somebody upon him that would disgrace him; but as he is so well, I am easy. I do not desire the little vanity of having everybody say, that if I had had the management of his affairs, he would not have been exposed; nor could any man, surely, who wished me ill, make such a blunder as to give me that triumph!

Have you heard, Madam, of the Quaker that has dined with the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois? It is exactly true. He would not pull off his hat; they admitted him with it on, and then made him sit down to table with them. Charles II could not have been better humoured.

They say the late Pope was poisoned by the Jesuits. These gentlemen and the Czarina will repoison many royal personages that Voltaire had unpoisoned; and as he has both abused and praised the Jesuits, he may take which side he pleases, as he has done about every other question.

In the neighbouring city of Twickenham they talk of nothing but houses broken open and robbed. I have called my militia into my castle, and mounted cannon on the battlements. Yet I was more afraid of a contested election for Middlesex; and when it was threatened, I thought I would not be the Duke of Northumberland's fine gate at Sion for the world. In short, one lives in very perilous times! The powder mills blow one up, and break all one's painted glass; one is robbed on the highway, though one is Prime Minister¹, and shot at into the bargain. I don't know what we shall come to, Madam; pray, do you? And pray, don't you think it is all that Wilkes's doing? Everybody would be good, and honest, and quiet, if it was not for him. Lady Greenwich

LETTER 1571.—¹ See letter to Mann of Oct. 6, 1774.

and I think so, and we hope you are of our opinion; and wonder some Christian don't murder him.

1572. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 29, 1774.

I HAVE received your letter of the 23rd, and it certainly overpays me, when you thank instead of scolding me, as I feared. A passionate man has very little merit in being in a passion, and is sure of saying many things he repents, as I do. I only hope you think that I could not be so much in the wrong for everybody; nor should have been, perhaps, even for you, if I had not been certain I was the only person, at that moment, that could serve you essentially: and at such a crisis, I am sure I should take exactly the same part again, except in saying some things I did, of which I am ashamed! I will say no more now on that topic, nor on anything relating to it, because I have written my mind very fully, and you will know it soon. I can only tell you now, that I approve extremely your way of thinking, and hope you will not change it before you hear from me, and know some material circumstances. You and Lady Ailesbury and I agree exactly, and she and I certainly consider only *you*. I do not answer her last, because I could not help telling you how very kindly I take your letter. All I beg is, that you would have no delicacy about my serving you any way. You know it is a pleasure to me: anybody else may have views that would embarrass you; and, therefore, till you are on the spot, and can judge for yourself (which I always insist on, because you are cooler than I, and because, though I have no interests to serve, I have passions, which equally mislead one), it will

LETTER 1572.—¹ Horace Walpole had had a violent quarrel with Lord Hertford on account of the latter's

failure to ensure General Conway's return at the general election. (See *Last Journals*, vol. i. pp. 401-17.)

be wiser to decline all kind of proposals and offers. You will avoid the plague of contested elections and solicitations : and I see no reasons, at present, that can tempt you to be in a hurry.

You must not expect to be Madame du Deffand's first favourite. Lady Ailesbury has made such a progress there, that you will not easily supplant her. I have received volumes in her praise. You have a better chance with Madame de Cambis², who is very agreeable ; and I hope you are not such an English husband as not to conform to the manners of Paris while you are there.

I forgot to mention one or two of my favourite objects to Lady Ailesbury ; nay, I am not sure she will taste one of them, the church of the Celestines. It is crowded with beautiful old tombs : one of Francis II whose beatitude is presumed from his being husband of the martyr Mary Stuart. Another is of the first wife³ of John Duke of Bedford, the Regent of France. I think you was once there with me formerly. The other is Richelieu's tomb, at the Sorbonne—but that everybody is carried to see. The Hôtel de Carnavalet⁴, near the Place Royale, is worth looking at, even for the façade, as you drive by. But of all earthly things the most worth seeing is the house at Versailles, where the King's pictures, not hung up, are kept. There is a treasure past belief, though in sad order, and piled one against another. Monsieur de Guerchy once carried me thither ; and you may certainly get leave. At the Luxembourg are some hung up, and one particularly is worth going to see alone : it is the 'Deluge' by Nicolò Poussin, as winter. The three other seasons are good for

² Gabrielle Charlotte François de Chimai, daughter of Alexandre Gabriel d'Alsace Hennin Liétard, Prince de Chimai, and wife of Jacques François, Vicomte de Cambis.

³ Anne (d. 1432), daughter of Jean sans Peur, Duke of Burgundy.

⁴ Where Madame de Sévigné resided. *Walpole*.

nothing; but the 'Deluge' is the first picture in the world of its kind. You will be shocked to see the glorious pictures at the Palais Royal transplanted to new canvases, and new painted and varnished, as if they were to be scenes at the Opera—at least, they had treated half a dozen of the best so, three years ago, and were going on. The Prince of Monaco has a few fine, but still worse used; one of them shines more than a looking-glass. I fear the exposition of pictures is over for this year; it is generally very *diverting*⁵. I, who went into every church of Paris, can assure you there are few worth it, but the Invalides—except the *scenery* at St. Roche, about one or two o'clock at noon, when the sun shines; the Carmelites, for the Guido and the portrait of Madame de la Vallière as a Magdalen; the Val de Grace⁶, for a moment; the *treasure* at Notre Dame; the Sainte Chapelle, where in the ante-chapel are two very large enamelled portraits; the tomb of Condé at the Great Jesuits in the Rue St. Antoine, if not shut up; and the little church of St. Louis in the Louvre, where is a fine tomb of Cardinal Fleury, but large enough to stand on Salisbury Plain. One thing some of you *must* remember, as you return; nay, it is better to go soon to St. Denis, and Madame du Deffand must get you a particular order to be shown (which is never shown without) the effigies of the kings. They are in presses over the treasure which is shown, and where is the glorious antique cameo-cup; but the countenance of Charles IX is so horrid and remarkable, you would think he had died on the morrow of the St. Barthélemi, and waked full of the recollection. If you love enamels and exquisite medals, get to see the collection of a Monsieur d'Henery, who lives in the corner of the street where Sir John Lambert⁷ lives—

⁵ He means from their extreme bad taste. *Walpole*.

⁶ A Benedictine convent.

⁷ Sir John Lambert, third Baronet, a banker in Paris; d. 1799.

I forget its name. There is an old man behind the Rue de Colombier, who has a great but bad collection of old French portraits; I delighted in them, but perhaps you would not. I, you may be sure, hunted out everything of that sort. The convent and collection of St. Germain, I mean that over against the Hôtel du Parc Royal, is well worth seeing—but I forget names strangely—Oh, delightful!—Lord Cholmondeley sends me word he goes to Paris on Monday: I shall send this and my other letter by him. It was him I meant; I knew he was going, and had prepared it.

Pray take care to lock up your papers in a strong box, that nobody can open. They imagine you are at Paris on some commission, and there is no trusting French hotels or servants. America is in a desperate situation. The accounts from the Congress are not expected before the 10th, and expected very warm. I have not time to tell you some manœuvres against them that will make your blood curdle. Write to me when you can by private hands, as I will to you. There are always English passing backwards and forwards.

1573. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 7, 1774.

I HAVE written such tomes to Mr. Conway¹, Madam, and have so nothing new to write, that I might as well, methinks, begin and end like the lady to her husband: 'Je vous écris parce que je n'ai rien à faire: je finis parce que je n'ai rien à vous dire.' Yes, I have two complaints to make, one of your Ladyship, the other of myself. You tell me nothing of Lady Harriet²: have you no tongue,

LETTER 1573.—¹ Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury were now at Paris together. *Walpole*.

² Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to Lord Foley. *Walpole*.

or the French no eyes? or are her eyes employed in nothing but seeing? What a vulgar employment for a fine woman's eyes after she is risen from her toilet! I declare I will ask no more questions—what is it to me, whether she is admired or not? I should know how charming she is, though all Europe were blind. I hope I am not to be told by any barbarous nation upon earth what beauty and grace are!

For myself, I am guilty of the gout in my elbow; the left—witness my handwriting. Whether I caught cold by the deluge in the night, or whether the bootikins, like the water of Styx, can only preserve the parts they surround, I doubt they have saved me but three weeks, for so long my reckoning has been out. However, as I feel nothing in my feet, I flatter myself that this Pindaric transition will not be a regular ode, but a fragment, the more valuable for being imperfect.

Now for my Gazette.—Marriages—Nothing done. Intrigues—More in the political than civil way. Births—Under par since Lady Berkeley left off breeding. Gaming—Low water. Deaths—Lord Morton³, Lord Wentworth⁴, Duchess Douglas⁵. Election stock—More buyers than sellers. Promotions—Mr. Wilkes as high as he can go.—Apropos, he was told Lord Chancellor⁶ intended to signify to him that the King did not approve the City's choice: he replied, 'Then I shall signify to his Lordship, that I am at least as fit to be Lord Mayor as he to be Lord Chancellor.' This being more gospel than everything Mr. Wilkes says, the formal approbation was given.

Mr. Burke has succeeded in Bristol, and Sir James Peachey⁷ will miscarry in Sussex. But what care you,

³ Sholto Charles Douglas (1732–1774), fifteenth Earl of Morton.

⁴ Edward Noel, first Viscount Wentworth.

⁵ Margaret Douglas, widow of the first Duke of Douglas.

⁶ Lord Apsley.

⁷ Sir James Peachey (1723–1808),

Madam, about our Parliament? You will see the *rentrée* of the old one⁸, with songs and epigrams into the bargain. We do not shift our Parliaments with so much gaiety. Money in one hand, and abuse in t'other—those are all the arts we know. *Wit and a gamut* I don't believe ever signified a Parliament, whatever the glossaries may say; for they never produce pleasantry and harmony. Perhaps you may not taste this Saxon pun, but I know it will make the Antiquarian Society die with laughing.

Expectation hangs on America. The result of the general assembly⁹ is expected in four or five days. If one may believe the papers, which one should not believe, the other-side-of-the-waterists are not *doux comme des moutons*, and yet we do intend to eat them. I was in town on Monday; the Duchess of Beaufort graced our loo, and made it as rantipole as a Quaker's meeting. *Loois Quinze*¹⁰, I believe, is arrived by this time, but I fear without *quinze louis*.

Your herb-snuff and the four glasses are lying in my warehouse, but I can hear of no ship going to Paris. You are now at Fontainebleau, but not thinking of Francis I, the Queen of Sweden¹¹, and Monaldeschi. It is terrible that one cannot go to courts that are gone! You have supped with the Chevalier de Boufflers¹²: did he act everything in the world, and sing everything in the world, and laugh at everything in the world? Has Madame de Cambis sung to you *Sans dépit, sans légèreté*¹³? Has Lord Cholmondeley delivered my packet? I hear I have hopes of Madame d'Olonne¹⁴. Gout or no gout, I shall be little in

fourth Baronet, cr. (Aug. 13, 1794)
Baron Selsey, of Selsey in Sussex.

⁸ The French Parliament.

⁹ A General Congress sat at Philadelphia from Sept. 5 to Oct. 29, 1774, to which twelve of the colonies sent delegates.

¹⁰ Probably Lady Powis.

¹¹ Christina, Queen of Sweden.

¹² Stanislas (1737-1815), Marquis, better known as the Chevalier, de Boufflers. He became a member of the French Academy in 1788.

¹³ The first words of a favourite French air. *Walpole*.

¹⁴ The enamel portrait mentioned in the letter to Conway of Sept. 28, 1774.

town till after Christmas. My elbow makes me bless myself that I am not at Paris. Old age is no such uncomfortable thing, if one gives oneself up to it with a good grace, and don't drag it about

To midnight dances and the public show.

If one stays quietly in one's own house in the country, and cares for nothing but oneself, scolds one's servants, condemns everything that is new, and recollects how charming a thousand things were formerly that were very disagreeable, one gets over the winters very well, and the summers get over themselves.

1574. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

I ENTIRELY approve all you say about your nephew ; and yet my affection for you and Gal's memory is so great, and I was so pleased with the young man last year, that I don't know how to help wishing that he had gone to you, as I think you would have liked him, unless he is like my nephew, engaging when with one, provoking when absent. I really thought him on his road to Florence ; but as I see by the newspapers that he is chosen into Parliament, I suppose he was not set out, or turned back on the dissolution. I cannot inquire without making a visit in my neighbourhood, which I never do make, but when absolutely necessary, for I know our agreement is less risked by absence than by meeting. I will say no more on the subject. I can trust to your good sense and good temper for always doing precisely what is right.

I have so very little to tell you, that I almost think I shall detain this letter till another post. Every day may bring us critical news from America, which will give the

chief colour to the winter. I am in perfect ignorance of the situation of affairs there. I live quietly here, unconnected with all factions, enjoying the delightful place I have made, and even enjoying my old age, since the gout keeps away. The bitterness of the last fit, succeeded by my stewardship, gives a flavour to my tranquillity that, perhaps, I should not taste so much, if I had not lost it for near a year and a half. I propose to be little absent hence till after Christmas, a longer stay than I ever made in the country; but what can I see in London that I have not seen fifty times over? There is a new race, indeed, but does it promise to make the times more agreeable? Does the world talk of our orators, poets, or wits? Oh, no! It talks of vast fortunes made, or vast fortunes lost at play! It talks of Wilkes at the top of the wheel, and of Charles Fox at the bottom: all between is a blank.

It is not much better anywhere else. The King of Prussia, the hero of the last war, has only been a pick-pocket in Poland. The Austrian and Russian eagles have turned vultures, and preyed on desolated campaigns. The Turkish war ended one don't know how without any signal action. France has been making Parliaments cross over and figure-in, and yet without the scene being at all amusing. For my part, I take Europe to be worn out. When Voltaire dies, we may say, 'Good night!' I don't believe this age will be more read than the Byzantine historians.

The bigamist Duchess¹ is likely to become a real peeress at last. Lord Bristol² has been struck with a palsy that has taken away the use of all his limbs. If he dies, and Augustus should take a fancy to marry again, as two or

LETTER 1574.—¹ Eliz. Chudleigh, married to the Duke of Kingston, though her husband, Augustus

Hervey, was living. *Walpole.*

² George William, second Earl of Bristol. *Walpole.*

three years ago he had a mind to do, his next brother, the Bishop³, may happen to assist the Duke of Kingston's relations with additional proofs of the first marriage. They now think they shall be able to intercept the receipt of the Duke's estate; but law is a horrid liar, and I never believe a word it says before the decision.

Nov. 14th.

There are advices from America that are said to be extremely bad: I don't know the particulars; but I have never augured well of that dispute! I fear we neither know how to proceed or retreat! I believe this is the case with many individuals, as well as with the public. Within this week we have had two deaths out of the common course. Bradshaw⁴, a man well known of late, but in a more silent way than for his *fame* to have reached you, shot himself yesterday se'nnight. His beginning was very obscure; when he grew more known, it was not to his honour. He has since been a very active minister, of the second or third class, and more trusted, perhaps, than some of a higher class. Instead of making a great fortune, he had spent one, and could not go on a week longer. The Duke of Athol⁵ is dead as suddenly; drowned certainly; whether delirious from a fever or from some disappointment, is not clear. Two evenings ago Lord Berkeley shot a highwayman⁶; in short, frenzy is at work from top to bottom, and I doubt we shall

³ Frederic Hervey, Bishop of Derry, who became Earl of Bristol after his brothers George and Augustus. *Walpole*.

⁴ Secretary of the Treasury. *Walpole*.

⁵ John Murray, third Duke of Athol.

⁶ Lord Berkeley, travelling after dark on Hounslow Heath, was wakened from a slumber by a strange face at his carriage window and a loaded pistol at his breast. "I have you now, my Lord," said the in-

truder, "after all your boasts, as I hear, that you would never let yourself be robbed!"—"Nor would I now," said Lord Berkeley, putting his hand into his pocket, as though to draw forth his purse, "but for that other fellow peeping over your shoulder." The highwayman hastily turned round to look at this unexpected intruder, when the Earl, pulling out instead of a purse a pistol, shot him dead upon the spot.' (Stanhope, *History of England*, ed. 1853-4, vol. vii. p. 313.)

not be cool till there has been a good deal of blood let. You and I shall, probably, not see the subsiding of the storm, if the humours do boil over; and can a nation be in a high fever without a crisis? I see the patients; I do not see the doctors. Adieu!

1575. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

I AM sorry there is still time, my dear Lord, to write to you again; and that though there is, I have so little to amuse you with. One is not much nearer news for being within ten miles of London than if in Yorkshire; and besides, whatever reaches us, Lady Greenwich catches at the rebound before me, and sends you before I can. Our own circle furnishes very little. Dowagers are good for propagating news when planted, but have done with sending forth suckers. Lady Blandford's coffee-house is removed to town, and the Duchess of Newcastle's is little frequented, but by your sister Anne¹, Lady Browne, and me. This morning, indeed, I was at a very fine concert at old Frank's at Isleworth, and heard Leoni, who pleased me more than anything I have heard these hundred years. There is a full melancholy melody in his voice, though a *falsetta*, that nothing but a natural voice ever compasses. Then he sung songs of Handel in the genuine simple style, and did not put one in pain like rope-dancers. Of the Opera I hear a dismal account; for I did not go to it to sit in our box like an old king dowager by myself. Garrick is treating the town, as it deserves and likes to be treated, with scenes, fireworks, and his own writing. A good new play I never expect to see more, nor have seen since *The Provoked Husband*, which came out when I was at school.

LETTER 1575.—¹ Lady Anne Conolly.

Bradshaw is dead, they say by his own hand: I don't know wherefore. I was told it was a great political event. If it is, our politics run as low as our plays. From town I heard that Lord Bristol was taken speechless with a stroke of the palsy. If he dies, Madam Chudleigh must be tried by her peers, as she is certainly either Duchess or Countess. Mr. Conway and his company are so pleased with Paris, that they talk of staying till Christmas. I am glad; for they will certainly be better diverted there than here.

Your Lordship's most faithful servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1576. TO ISAAC REED¹.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 11, 1774.

THOUGH you have not been so good as to let me know to whom I am so much obliged², yet I am very glad you have given me an opportunity at least of thanking you. Had I sooner known how, I should have saved you some trouble, as several of the notices you have sent me had already come to my knowledge, and are actually inserted in a new edition of my *Catalogue*³, which has been long printed, though from some other reasons not yet published. Indeed, Sir, I am ashamed that you should have thrown away so much time upon a work that deserved it so little, and which I am sorry I cannot now make more perfect by your assistance, it being printed with other trifles of my own, and, consequently, I should be obliged to throw away the whole edition if I altered it; and that is too late to do at my time of life, subject as I am to long confinements from

LETTER 1576. -¹ Isaac Reed (1742-1807), the editor of Shakespeare.

² According to Cunningham the letter was addressed to 'Mr. I. R.,

to be left at the Chapter Coffee-house, London.'

³ The *Catalogue of Engravers*.

the gout; a reflection that has made me give over all thoughts of troubling the public any more, which has been too indulgent to me already.

If you were inclined to be still more kind to me, it would be by letting me have the pleasure of knowing to whom I am so much indebted. I shall not be in town to stay, probably, till after Christmas, and then should be very glad to wait on you or to see you in Arlington Street, to assure you how much I am, Sir,

Your obliged and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1577. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 12, 1774.

I HAVE received a delightful letter from you of four sheets, and another since. I shall not reply to the campaigning part (though much obliged to you for it), because I have twenty other subjects more pressing to talk of. The first is to thank you for your excessive goodness to my dear old friend¹—she has some indiscretions, and *you must not have any to her*; but she has the best heart in the world, and I am happy, at her great age, that she has spirits enough not to be always upon her guard. A bad heart, especially after long experience, is but too apt to overflow *inwardly* with prudence. At least, as I am but too like her, and have corrected too few of my faults, I would fain persuade myself that some of them flow from a good principle—but I have not time to talk of myself, though you are much too partial to me, and give me an opportunity; yet I shall not take it.

Now for English news, and then your letter again. There has been a great mortality here; though Death has rather

LETTER 1577.—¹ Madame du Deffand.

been *prîé* than a volunteer. Bradshaw (as I told Lady Aylesbury last post) shot himself. He is dead, totally undone. Whether that alone was the cause, or whether he had not done something worse, I doubt. I cannot conceive that, with his resources, he should have been hopeless—and, to suspect him of delicacy, impossible!

A ship is arrived from America, and I doubt with very bad news; for none but trifling letters have yet been given out—but I am here, see nobody that knows anything, and only hear by accident from people that drop in. The sloop that is to bring the result of the general assembly is not yet come. There are indeed rumours, that both the non-importation and even non-exportation have been decreed², and that the flame is universal. I hope this is exaggerated! yet I am told the stocks will fall very much in a day or two.

I have nothing to tell Lady Aylesbury, but that I hear a deplorable account of the Opera. There is a new puppet-show at Drury Lane, as fine as scenes can make it, called *The Maid of the Oaks*³, and as dull as the author could not help making it.

Except M. d'Hérouville⁴, I know all the people you name. C. I doubt, by things I have heard formerly, may have been a *concussionnaire*. The Duke, your *protecteur*⁵, is *médiocre* enough; you would have been more pleased with his wife.

² 'During their sittings in the autumn of 1774 the Congress passed resolutions to suspend all imports, or use of imports, from Great Britain or Ireland, or any of their dependencies, after the first day of December next, and all exports to those countries after the 10th of September in the year ensuing, unless American grievances should be redressed before that time.' (Stanhope, *History of England*, ed. 1853-4, vol. vi. p. 16.)

³ By Colonel John Burgoyne. It

was originally acted at The Oaks, Epsom, on the occasion of the marriage of Lord Stanley (Burgoyne's nephew by marriage) to Lady Betty Hamilton.

⁴ Antoine Ricouart (d. 1782), Comte d'Hérouville de Claye, a military writer.

⁵ The Duc de la Valière; of whom Mr. Conway had said that when presented to him his reception was what might be called good, but rather *de protection*. *Berry*.

The Chevalier's⁶ *bon mot* is excellent, and so is he. He has as much *bouffonnerie* as the Italians, with more wit and novelty. His impromptu verses often admirable. Get Madame du Deffand to show you his embassy to the Princess Christine⁷, and his verses on his eldest uncle, beginning *Si Monsieur de Veau*⁸. His second uncle has

⁶ The Chevalier de Bouffiers.

⁷ The Princess Christina of Saxony, Abbess of Remiremont. On the death of her father, the King of Poland, the Chevalier was sent to her with a message of condolence from the ex-King Stanislaus Lecinski, to whose household the Chevalier at that time belonged. On his return M. de Bouffiers obtained leave to write the account of his embassy, which he did in verse. In order to understand the song it should be known that the Princess was very plain, and had very full cheeks, that the Chevalier had one side of his face much swelled at the time, and that he was allowed for his trouble only the expense of the post-horses.'

Récit du Voyage.

'Enyvré du brillant poste,
Que j'occupe maintenant,
Dans une chaise de poste,
Je me campe fièrement ;
Et je vais, en Ambassade,
Au nom de mon Souverain,
Dire, que je suis malade,
Et que luy se porte bien.
Avec une joue enflée,
Je débarque tout honteux ;
La Princesse boursofflée,
Au lieu d'une, en avait deux,
Et son Altesse Sauvage
Sans doute a trouvé mauvais,
Que j'eusse sur mon visage
La moitié de ses attraits.'

Compliment de l'Ambassadeur.

'Princesse, le Roi mon maître
Pour Ambassadeur m'a pris ;
Je viens vous faire connaître
Les feux dont il est épris :
Quand vous seriez sous le chaume,

Il donnerait (m'a-t-il dit)
La moitié de son royaume
Pour celle de votre lit.'

Récit.

'La Princesse à son pupitre
Compose un remerciement,
Puis, me remet une épître,
Que j'emporte lestement.
Et je m'en vais dans la rue
Fort satisfait d'ajouter
À l'honneur de l'avoir vue
Le plaisir de la quitter.
Dans ces beaux lieux en revenant,
Je quitte l'Excellence ;
Et je reçois, pour traitement,
Cent-vingt livres de France.'

(*Memoirs of Laetitia Matilda Hawkins*,
1824, vol. ii. pp. 208-9.)

⁸ The impromptu in question was prompted by the contrast between the beauty of the Duc de Beauvau and the plainness of M. de Vaux, colleague of the Duc in the household of the ex-King Stanislaus. It runs as follows :—

'Si Monsieur de Vaux
Était un peu plus beau,
Que Monsieur de Beauvau
Fût un peu moins beau ;
Ce Monsieur de Vaux
Serait un beau veau,
Et Monsieur de Beauvau
Ne serait plus qu'un veau.
Mes parentes
Et mes tantes
Seraient un troupeau
Des Nymphes I O.
Si Monsieur, &c.
Puis on les bouillirait,
Puis on les rôtirait ;
En blanquettes,
En croquettes,

parts, but they are not so natural. Madame de Caraman⁹ is a very good kind of woman, but has not a quarter of her sister's parts. Madame de Mirepoix is *the* agreeable woman of the world when she pleases—but there must not be a card in the room. Lord ——¹⁰ has acted like himself; that is, unlike anybody else. You know, I believe, that I think him a very good speaker; but I have little opinion of his judgement and knowledge of the world, and a great opinion of his affectation and insincerity. The Abbé Raynal, though he wrote that fine work on the *Commerce des Deux Indes*, is the most tiresome creature in the world. The first time I met him was at the dull Baron d'Olbach's: we were twelve at table: I dreaded opening my mouth in French, before so many people and so many servants: he began questioning me, 'cross the table, about our colonies, which I understand as I do Coptic. I made him signs I was deaf. After dinner he found I was not, and never forgave me. Mademoiselle de Raucoux¹¹ I never saw till you told me Madame du Deffand said she was *démoniaque sans chaleur*! What painting! I see her now. Le Kain sometimes pleased me, oftener not. Molé¹² is charming in genteel or in pathetic comedy, and would be fine in tragedy, if he was stronger. Préville¹³ is always perfection. I like his wife in affected parts, though not animated enough. There was a delightful woman who did the Lady Wishforts, I don't know if there still, I think her name Mademoiselle Drouin¹⁴; and a fat woman, rather elderly, who sometimes acted the

On les servirait,

On les mangerait.

Si Monsieur, &c.

(*Memoirs*, as above, vol. ii. p. 211.)

⁹ Anne Gabrielle de Chimai, daughter of Alexandre Gabriel d'Alsace Hennin Liétard, Prince de Chimai, and wife of the Comte de Caraman. Her sister was the Vicomtesse de Cambis.

¹⁰ Apparently Lord Shelburne,

who was in Paris in the autumn of 1774.

¹¹ Françoise Clairien Raucourt (1753–1815).

¹² François René Molé (1734–1802).

¹³ Pierre Louis Dubus, known as Préville (1721–1799).

¹⁴ Marie Michelle Angélique Drouin (1731–1794), was in fact Préville's wife.

soubrette. But you have missed the Dumenil, and Caillaut¹⁵! What irreparable losses! Madame du Deffand, perhaps—I don't know—could obtain your hearing the Clairon—yet the Dumenil was infinitely preferable.

I could now almost find in my heart to laugh at you for liking Boutin's garden¹⁶. Do you know that I drew a plan of it, as the completest absurdity I ever saw? What! a river that wriggles at right angles through a stone gutter, with two tansy puddings that were dug out of it, and three or four beds in a row, by a corner of the wall, with samples of grass, corn, and of *en friche*, like a tailor's paper of patterns! And you like this! I will tell Park Place—Oh, I had forgot your audience in dumb-show—Well, as Madame de Sévigné said, 'Le Roi de Prusse, c'est le plus grand Roi du monde' still¹⁷. My love to the old Parliament; I don't love new ones.

I went several times to Madame de Monconseil's, who is just what you say. Mesdames de Tingri et de la Vauguion¹⁸ I never saw: Madame de Noailles once or twice, and enough. You say something of Madame Mallet, which I could not read; for, by the way, your brother and I agree that you are grown not to write legibly: is that lady in being?

¹⁵ Joseph Caillot (1732-1816), a celebrated performer in Italian comedy. He retired in 1772.

¹⁶ See another ludicrous description of this garden in a letter to Mr. Chute. *Walpole*.—The letter of August 5, 1771; that to the Countess of Ossory of Aug. 11, 1771, contains a plan of the garden.

¹⁷ Miss Berry notes that this alludes to General Conway's presentation to Louis XVI at Fontainebleau, of which, in his letter to Mr. Walpole, he gives the following account:—'On St. Hubert's day in the morning I had the honour of being presented to the King: 'twas a good day and an excellent deed. You

may be sure I was well received, the French are so polite! and their court so polished!—The Emperor indeed talked to me every day; so did the King of Prussia regularly and much: but this was not to be compared to the extraordinary reception of his Most Christian Majesty, who, when I was presented, did not stop, nor look to see what sort of an animal was offered to his notice, but carried his head, as it seemed, somewhat higher, and passed his way.'

¹⁸ Marie Françoise de Béthune-Charost, daughter of the Duc de Béthune; m. (1734) the Duc de la Vauguion.

I knew her formerly. Madame de Blot¹⁹ I know, and Monsieur de Paulmy²⁰ I know; but for Heaven's sake who is Colonel Conway²¹? Mademoiselle Sanadon is *la sana donna*, and not Mademoiselle *Celadon*²², as you call her. Pray assure my good Monsieur Schouvaloff of my great regard: he is one of the best of beings.

I have said all I could, at least all I should. I reserve the rest of my paper for a postscript; for this is but Saturday, and my letter cannot depart till Tuesday: but I could not for one minute defer answering your charming volumes, which interest me so much. I grieve for Lady Harriet's²³ swelled face, and wish for both their sakes she could transfer it to her father. I assure her I meant nothing by desiring you to see the verses to the Princess Christine, wherein there is very profane mention of a pair of swelled cheeks. I hear nothing of Madame d'Olonne²⁴. Oh, make Madame du Deffand show you the sweet portrait of Madame de Prie, the Duke of Bourbon's mistress²⁵. Have you seen Madame de Monaco, and the remains of Madame de Brionne? If you wish to see Mrs. A——, ask for the Princesse de Ligne. If you have seen Monsieur de Maurepas, you have seen the late Lord Hardwicke²⁶. By your not naming him, I suppose the Duc de Nivernois is not at Paris. Say a great deal for

¹⁹ Marie Cécile Pauline d'Ennerie, wife of Gilbert de Chavigni, Baron de Blot.

²⁰ Marc Antoine René Le Voyer (1722–1787), Marquis de Paulmy, son of the Marquis d'Argenson, sometime Minister for Foreign Affairs.

²¹ An officer in the French service. *Walpole*.

²² Mademoiselle Sanadon, a lady who lived with Madame du Deffand. *Walpole*.

²³ Lady Harriet Stanhope, afterwards married to Lord Foley, was at this time at Paris with her father the Earl of Harrington. *Walpole*.

²⁴ The beautiful miniature of Madame d'Olonne, now at Strawberry Hill. *Walpole*.

²⁵ This portrait is now at Strawberry Hill. *Walpole*.—Agnès Berthelot de Pleneuf (d. 1727), Marquise de Prie, mistress of the Duc de Bourbon, who became Prime Minister on the death of the Regent Orléans, and who was disgraced in 1726. At the same time the Marquise de Prie was exiled to Normandy, where she committed suicide by poison in the following year.

²⁶ He means from their personal resemblance. *Walpole*.

me to M. de Guisnes. You will not see my passion, the Duchess de Châtillon²⁷. If you see Madame de Nivernois, you will think the Duke of Newcastle is come to life again. Alas! where is my postscript? Adieu!

1578. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 14, 1774.

I SHOULD not have been silent so long, Madam, had I had anything agreeable to tell you; but really the times are so melancholy, that I do not care to trouble my friends with my gloomy reflections. I do not indeed know what is the matter, nor what I am so grieved about, but still as long as I see that

There is something rotten in the state of Denmark,
I am too good a patriot or courtier, which is the same thing,
not to have my bosom full of cares and anxiety.

Portents and prodigies have grown so frequent
That they have lost their name.

I cannot say that the Thames has run backwards or overflown Richmond Hill, that the stars drop out of their sockets, that I have heard wolves howl at noonday, or that the churchyard has given up its dead to frighten people into their senses, instead of out of them, as ghosts one should think would do, if one did not know the contrary from the best authorities. Still indubitably the times are out of joint, and one must despair of the commonwealth, when Marcus Portius Bradshaw falls by his own hand, and Scotch dukes fall into horse-ponds as they are taking a walk in a fine November evening; but I will not fill your Ladyship's mind with the apprehensions that these omens have raised in mine; I will quit the subject, and answer your letter.

²⁷ So in the printed editions, but read Châtelet.

You do me a great deal too much honour in suspecting me of writing a speech for the new senator. All the good things in that speech were George Selwyn's, and have been repeated in every coffee-house in town these three weeks; and though I am sorry my nephew's madness has exposed him to the dirty malice of anybody that had too little generosity not to take advantage of it, I should not have been the person certainly to joke on such an occasion, divert the town at the expense of so near a relation, to whom I trust I have shown very different attention. Madness is an excuse for my nephew; they who make a friend of Macreth without being out of their senses have I suppose very good or very bad reasons for it.

Don't imagine, Madam, that I shall congratulate you on the sale of your house, at least not till I hear you have bought another. I still less can compliment you on Lord Ossory's flinging away so much money on an election, and not for himself, who was sure of his own seat. However, I do not deny but there was a greatness of mind in it, at least gratitude, considering the many favours he has received, and that he is the only one of his connection that has received any.

I am not settled in Arlington Street, nor shall be till after Christmas, Madam. I grow so old, that I find the quiet composed life I lead here more agreeable than the ways of London, and the same eternal round of the very same things. I am making catalogues of my collection, building a hothouse, ranging my medals which I have brought hither, sorting and burning papers, in short, *setting my house in order* against a certain time that happens but once in one's *life*, and which one has not time to think of in town. I have consequently not seen Armida nor Mrs. Abingdon's coiffure, which I conclude consists of as many plumes as the helmet of Otranto. The only time

I saw Lady Mary Somerset she had moulted her feathers, and wore a hat over her nose, so I only fell in love with her chin. The measles I had in the last century, and as it is one of the juvenile attributes that one does not cut a second time, like one's colt's tooth and a caper, I shall take care not to appear in public till the fashion is over, that I may be *censé* to be confined with a red face instead of a very pale one. I rejoice for Lady Louisa's sake that the measles leave no marks: she will lose nothing by a fortnight's eclipse. The only new thing I know is that I have heard Leoni, and don't remember that I ever was so pleased with a voice since *you* were born; and yet he was hoarse, by an accident which the Jews don't quite prevent.

1579. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Nov. 23, 1774.

I AM in town, Madam, and in great distress. I have lost a most faithful friend and servant, my deputy Mr. Tullie¹, and as I am a *Roi Fainéant*, I know not how to conduct my own affairs. One's first thought you may be sure is to send for Lord Chatham, but as I have difficulties enough, I don't want to be helped into more; and therefore I shall leave that resource to my heir-apparent, Mr. Martin, and only consult *my friends*. It is some comfort to me that Mr. Tullie did not die *en ministre*, but in his bed. The nation had another great loss last night: Lord Clive went off suddenly. He had been sent for to town by one of his Indian friends—and died. You may imagine, Madam, all that is said already. In short, people will be forced to die before as many witnesses as an old queen is brought to bed, or the coroner will be sent for.

LETTER 1579.—¹ Joseph Tullie, Deputy Usher of the Exchequer.

Have you got the *History of the Troubadours*? It is very curious: I have longed for it several years, and yet am cruelly disappointed. St. Palaye was too old to put his materials together; his friends called 'Odd man!' and nothing was ever so dully executed. You will say of the chapters, as I did of the houses at Paris, there is such a sameness, that one does not know whether one is in that one is in, or in that one came out of.

Lord H. has just been here, and told me *the manner* of Lord Clive's death. Whatever had happened, it had flung him into convulsions, to which he was very subject. Dr. Fothergill gave him, as he had done on like occasions, a dose of laudanum, but the pain in his bowels was so violent, that he asked for a second dose. Dr. Fothergill said, if he took another, he would be dead in an hour. The moment Fothergill was gone, he swallowed another, for another it seems stood by him, and he is dead.

I am very sorry to hear Lord Holland is so ill. Does not Lord Ossory come to renew his senatorial dignity?

1580. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 24, 1774.

I THANK you, my dear Sir, for your news of the Conclave and of the Duchess¹ and her ship-load of plunder. If the captain carries it off, it will be but an episode well suited to the history. I shall like a continuation of both subjects.

As you only say that you mentioned a certain election to the Countess², I conclude you had not yet received my letter for her. The interlude of Macreth has given so much offence, that, after having run the gauntlet, he has

LETTER 1580.—¹ The Duchess of Kingston. *Walpole*.

² Countess Orford, living at Florence. *Walpole*.

been persuaded to be modest and give up his seat³. I should not say *give*, but *sell* it. I do not believe the buyer will be much more creditable; but, happily, I am free from all this disgraceful transaction.

I have informed myself from Mr. Croft about your nephew; he and his wife are in the south of France and are to winter there, but will make you a visit in the spring before their return. However, as they probably will not stay long, forgive me if I say I think you had better lodge them. Will it be difficult with your temper to be patient and complying; and to Gal's son! I am persuaded you will like him; and when he sees an uncle so like his father in all goodness, can it but make impression on him? And if you can effect the least good is it not worth your while? The wife's family too demands attention.

A great event happened two days ago—a political and moral event; the sudden death of that second Kouli Khan, Lord Clive. There was certainly illness in the case; the world thinks more than illness. His constitution was exceedingly broken and disordered, and grown subject to violent pains and convulsions. He came unexpectedly to town last Monday, and they say, ill. On Tuesday his physician gave him a dose of laudanum, which had not the desired effect. On the rest, there are two stories; one, that the physician repeated the dose; the other, that he doubled it himself, contrary to advice. In short, he has terminated at fifty a life of so much glory, reproach, art, wealth, and ostentation! He had just named ten members for the new Parliament.

Next Tuesday that Parliament is to meet—and a deep game it has to play! few Parliaments a greater. The world is in amaze here that no account is arrived from America of the result of their General Congress—if any

³ Macreth did not retire.

is come it is very secret ; and *that* has no favourable aspect. The combination and spirit there seem to be universal, and is very alarming. I am the humble servant of events, and you know never meddle with prophecy. It would be difficult to descry good omens, be the issue what it will.

The old French Parliament is restored with great *éclat*. Monsieur de Maurepas, author of the revolution, was received one night at the Opera with boundless shouts of applause. It is even said that the mob intended, when the King should go to hold the *lit de justice*, to draw his coach. How singular it would be if Wilkes's case should be copied for a King of France ! Do you think Rousseau was in the right, when he said that he could tell what would be the manners of any capital city, from certain given lights ? I don't know what he may do on Constantinople and Pekin—but Paris and London ! I don't believe Voltaire likes these changes. I have seen nothing of his writing for many months ; not even on the poisoning Jesuits⁴. For our part, I repeat it, we shall contribute nothing to the *Histoire des Mœurs*, not for want of materials, but for want of writers. We have comedies without novelty, gross satires without stings, metaphysical eloquence, and antiquarians that discover nothing.

Bocotûm in crasso jurares aere natos !

Don't tell me I am grown old and peevish and supercilious—name the geniuses of 1774, and I submit. The next Augustan age will dawn on the other side of the Atlantic. There will, perhaps, be a Thucydides at Boston, a Xenophon at New York, and, in time, a Virgil at Mexico, and a Newton at Peru. At last, some curious traveller from Lima will visit England and give a description of the ruins of St. Paul's, like the editions of Balbec and Palmyra ; but am I not

⁴ They poisoned Pope Ganganelli. *Walpole*.

prophesying, contrary to my consummate prudence, and casting horoscopes of empires like Rousseau? Yes; well, I will go and dream of my visions.

29th.

P.S. Macreth *ayant bu sa honte* is determined to continue a member, like the rest of the world. The Ecclesiastical Court, I hear, has decided, and will pronounce, that the person commonly called Duchess of Kingston is a certain Mrs. Hervey. The new Lord Holland⁵ is dead—stay; you must not believe a word I tell you. Truth in this climate won't keep sweet four-and-twenty hours. Lord Bristol says nothing can be done against the Duchess of Kingston.

The Parliament opened just now—they say the speech talks of the *rebellion*⁶ of the province of Massachusetts; but if *they-say* tells a lie, I wash my hands of it. As your gazetteer, I am obliged to send you all news, true or false. I have believed and unbelieved everything I have heard since I came to town. Lord Clive has died every death in the parish register; at present it is most fashionable to believe he cut his throat. That he is dead, is certain; so is Lord Holland—and so is not the Bishop of Worcester⁷; however, to show you that I am at least as well informed as greater personages, the bishopric was on Saturday given to Lord North's brother⁸—so for once the Irishman was in the right, and a pigeon, at least a dove, can be in two places at once.

⁵ Stephen Fox, second Lord Holland. *Walpole*.

⁶ This was not the case.

⁷ James Johnson, Bishop of Worcester, died on Nov. 26, 1774.

⁸ Hon. Brownlow North (1741–

1820), second son of first Earl of Guilford by his second wife, and half-brother of Lord North; Bishop of Lichfield, 1771–74; of Worcester, 1774–81; of Winchester, 1781–1820.

1581. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Nov. 27, 1774.

I HAVE received your delightful plump packet with a letter of six pages, one from Madame du Deffand, the *Éloges*¹, and the *lit de justice*. Now, observe my gratitude: I appoint you my resident at Paris; but you are not to resemble all our ministers abroad, and expect to live at home, which would destroy my Lord Castlecomer's view in your staying at Paris. However, to prove to you that I have some gratitude that is not totally selfish, I will tell you what little news I know, before I answer your letter; for English news, to be sure, is the most agreeable circumstance in a letter from England.

On my coming to town yesterday, there was nothing but more deaths—don't you think we have the plague? The Bishop of Worcester, Lord Breadalbane², Lord Strathmore³. The first fell from his horse, or with his horse, at Bath, and the bishopric was incontinently given to Bishop North.

America is still more refractory, and I doubt will outvote the ministry. They have picked General Gage's pocket of three pieces of cannon, and intercepted some troops that were going to him. Sir William Draper is writing plans of pacification in our newspapers; and Lord Chatham flatters himself that he shall be sent for when the patient is given over; which I don't think at all unlikely to happen. My poor nephew⁴ is very political too: so we shall not want mad-doctors. Apropos, I hear Wilkes says he will propose Macreth for Speaker.

The Ecclesiastical Court are come to a resolution that the

LETTER 1581.—¹ Of La Fontaine, by Chamfort and La Harpe.

² Lord Breadalbane lived until 1782.

³ This was a false report.

⁴ George Walpole, Earl of Orford. Walpole.

Duchess of Kingston is Mrs. Hervey ; and the sentence will be public in a fortnight. It is not so certain that she will lose the estate. Augustus⁵ is not in a much more pleasant predicament than she is. I saw Lord Bristol last night : he looks perfectly well, but his speech is much affected, and his right hand.

Lady Lyttelton, who, you know, never hears anything that has happened, wrote to me two days ago, to ask if it would not be necessary for *you* to come over for the meeting of the Parliament. I answered, very gravely, that to be sure you ought : but though *Sir James Morgan* threatened you loudly with a petition, yet, as it could not be heard till after Christmas, I was afraid you would not be persuaded to come sooner. I hope she will inquire who *Sir James Morgan* is, and that people will persuade her she has made a confusion about *Sir James Peachy*. Now for your letter.

I have been in the *Chambre de Parlement*, I think they call it the *Grande Chambre* ; and was shown the corner in which the monarchs sit, and do not wonder you did not guess where it was they sat. It is just like the dark corner, under the window, where I always sat in the House of Commons. What has happened has passed exactly according to my ideas. When one King breaks one Parliament, and another another, what can the result be but despotism⁶ ? or of what else is it a proof ? If a Tory king displaces his father's Whig Lord Chamberlain, neither Lord Chamberlain has the more or the less power over the theatres and court mournings and Birthday balls. All that can arrive is, that the people will be still more attached to the old Parliament, from this seeming restitution of a right—but the people

⁵ Augustus Hervey, to whom she was first married. *Walpole*.

⁶ At a *lit de justice* held on the occasion of the restoration of the Parliament of Paris, Louis XVI pronounced strongly in favour of his

own supreme authority, and warned the members of the Parliament against interference in matters which might bring them into collision with the royal power.

must have some power before their attachment can signify a straw. The old Parliament, too, may some time or other give itself more airs on this confession of right; but that too cannot be but in a minority, or when the power of the crown is lessened by reasons that have nothing to do with the Parliament. I will answer for it, they will be too *grateful* to give umbrage to their restorer. Indeed, I did not think the people would be so quick-sighted at once, as to see the distinction of old and new was without a difference. Methinks France and England are like the land and the sea; one gets a little sense when the other loses it.

I am quite satisfied with all you tell me about my friend⁷. My intention is certainly to see her again, if I am able; but I am too old to lay plans, especially when it depends on the despot gout to register or cancel them. It is even melancholy to see her, when it will probably be but once more; and still more melancholy, when we ought to say to one another, in a different sense from the common, *au revoir*! However, as mine is a pretty cheerful kind of philosophy, I think the best way is to think of dying, but to talk and act as if one was not to die; or else one tires other people, and dies before one's time. I have truly all the affection and attachment for her that she deserves from me, or I should not be so very thankful as I am for your kindness to her. The Choiseuls will certainly return at Christmas, and will make her life much more agreeable. The Duchess has as much attention to her as I could have; but that will not keep me from making her a visit.

I have only seen, not known, the younger Madame de Boufflers⁸. For her musical talents, I am little worthy of them—yet I am just going to Lady Bingham's to hear the Bastardella⁹, whom, though the first singer in Italy,

⁷ Madame du Deffand.

⁸ Amélie Désaleurs, Comtesse de Boufflers. She was an accomplished

harpist.

⁹ Lucrezia Agujari (d. 1783), so called in allusion to her birth.

Mrs. Yates¹⁰ could not or would not agree with¹¹; and she is to have twelve hundred pounds for singing twelve times at the Pantheon, where, if she had a voice as loud as Lord Clare's, she could not be heard. The two *bons mots* you sent me are excellent; but, alas! I had heard them both before; consequently your own, which is very good too, pleased me much more. M. de Stainville¹² I think you will not like: he has sense, but has a dry military harshness, that at least did not suit me—and then I hate his barbarity to his wife¹³.

You was very lucky indeed to get one of the sixty tickets¹⁴. Upon the whole, your travels have been very fortunate, and the few mortifications amply compensated. If a Duke¹⁵ has been spiteful when your back was turned, a Hero-King¹⁶ has been all courtesy. If another King¹⁷ has been silent, an Emperor¹⁸ has been singularly gracious. Frowns or silence may happen to anybody: the smiles have been addressed to you particularly. So was the ducal frown indeed—but would you have earned a smile at the price set on it? One cannot do right and be always applauded—but in such cases are not frowns tantamount?

As my letter will not set forth till the day after to-morrow, I reserve the rest for my additional news, and this time *will* reserve it.

St. Parliament's day, 29th, after breakfast.

The Speech is said to be firm, and to talk of the *rebellion* of our province of Massachusetts. No sloop is yet arrived to tell us how to call the rest. Mr. Van¹⁹ is to move for the

¹⁰ Anna Maria Yates (d. 1787), actress; at this time Joint-Manager of the Opera.

¹¹ To sing at the Opera. *Walpole*.

¹² The Comte de Choiseul-Stainville, brother of the Duc de Choiseul.

¹³ Upon a suspicion of gallantry, she was confined for life. *Walpole*.

¹⁴ To witness the opening of the restored Parliament.

¹⁵ The Duc de Choiseul.

¹⁶ The King of Prussia.

¹⁷ Louis XVI.

¹⁸ Joseph II.

¹⁹ Charles Van, M.P. for Brecon.

expulsion of Wilkes; which will distress, and may produce an odd scene. Lord Holland is certainly dead; the papers say Robinson²⁰ too, but that I don't know:—so many deaths of late make report kill to right and left.

1582. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 15, 1774.

As I wrote to Lady Aylesbury but on Tuesday, I should not have followed it so soon with this, if I had nothing to tell you but of myself. My gout is never dangerous, and the shades of them not important. However, to dispatch this article at once, I will tell you that the pain I felt yesterday in my elbow made me think all former pain did not deserve the name. Happily the torture did not last above two hours; and, which is more surprising, it is all the real pain I have felt; for though my hand has been as sore as if flayed, and that both feet are lame, the bootkins demonstrably prevent or extract the sting of it, and I see no reason not to expect to get out in a fortnight more. Surely, if I am laid up but one month in two years, instead of five or six, I have reason to think the bootkins sent from heaven.

The long-expected sloop is arrived at last, and is, indeed, a *man of war*! The General Congress have voted a non-importation, a non-exportation, a non-consumption; that, in case of hostilities committed by the troops at Boston, the several provinces will march to the assistance of their countrymen; that the cargoes of ships now at sea shall be sold on their arrival, and the money arising thence given to the poor at Boston; that a letter, in the nature of a petition of rights, shall be sent to the King; another to the House

²⁰ John Robinson, M.P. for Harwich and Secretary to the Treasury;

he was not dead, but was disabled by paralysis.

of *Commons*; a third to the people of England; a demand of repeal of all the Acts of Parliament affecting North America passed during this reign, as also of the Quebec Bill: and these resolutions not to be altered till such repeal is obtained.

Well, I believe you do not regret being neither in Parliament nor in administration! As you are an idle man, and have nothing else to do, you may sit down and tell one a remedy for all this. Perhaps you will give yourself airs, and say you was a prophet, and that prophets are not honoured in their own country. Yet, if you have any inspiration about you, I assure you it will be of great service. We are at our wit's end—which was no great journey. Oh, you conclude Lord Chatham's crutch will be supposed a wand, and be sent for. They might as well send for *my* crutch; and they should not have it; the stile is a little too high to help them over. His Lordship is a little fitter for raising a storm than laying one, and of late seems to have lost both virtues. The Americans at least have acted like men, gone to the bottom at once, and set the whole upon the whole. Our conduct has been that of pert children: we have thrown a pebble at a mastiff, and are surprised it was not frightened. Now we must be worried by it, or must kill the guardian of the house, which will be plundered the moment little master has nothing but the old nurse to defend it. But I have done with reflections; you will be fuller of them than I.

1583. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 23, 1774.

You will perceive by the change of writing that my hand hath lost its cunning. I had kept off the gout for two

LETTER 1583.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

months by the bootikins, but the mighty has prevailed, vanquished me and my armour, and bound me hand and foot above a fortnight. However, the talisman has had so much virtue that the wounds have not been deep, nor will the scars, I think, remain long. Yet for these last five days I have been very ill, less by the gout than by its consequential weakness, which has chiefly affected my breast. I remember how I used to joke, on your wet-brown-paperhood; alas! I, who was never of pasteboard, nor had a title to robust airs, seem now to be of Indian paper—but I am talking too much of myself, when I am thinking much more of you. I received a letter from you late last night that alarmed me. In it you speak of an attack of gout in terms that frighten me. I was so faint and feverish then that I could do nothing to help or quiet myself, for one cannot reason in the night on a painful pillow, so I lay thinking on you despondingly till six in the morning. As soon as I waked I sent to Mr. Croft, but he had heard nothing of you. However, as my head was grown a little clearer, I called for your letter again, and was rejoiced to find the date November the 18th, for I recollected that I had received another from you a fortnight ago whose date must be later, and so it proved, being of the 22nd. This last had brought me my Lady's answer, and that of the 18th only mentions your having delivered mine. Now the good 22nd says not a word of your illness continuing, and therefore I trust it was gone and forgotten. What the lazy 18th had been doing, or where it had stopped to drink, I don't know, but I wish it had broken its neck and never arrived!

I am glad there is an end of the other correspondence with all its high-flown compliments. The colours, however, given to the calmness are not strictly exact. The agents here could not have prevented what has happened, unless

they had received fuller powers; and it is to disguise that very ill-judged and timid policy that the blame is now laid on the sudden dissolution. However, if people are so very wise as to dupe themselves, it is no business of mine, nor shall I think any more about it.

I am so confined and able to see so little company that it is impossible I should tell you anything more than you can read in the common newspapers. The new Parliament has done nothing but common business, and appointed hearings of contested elections. What it will do after the holidays, I wish it knew itself! It must be wiser than any of its predecessors if it can remedy what the two last of them have done. In short, all North America is in a flame, and I don't see whatever the future measures shall be, but they will be new barrels of oil. However, as the quintessence of the wisdom of the nation does not lie in my head, for I did not inherit the head in which it once did lie, and as mine will probably be laid long before these troubles are at an end, I shall not trouble myself with what I can neither cure nor expect to see terminated happily.

Lord Chatham's eldest daughter is married to Lord Mahon, Lord Stanhope's son and a descendant of your old Baileys¹ and Binnings, so I make you my compliments, though I believe you are like me and don't carry on your attachments to third and fourth generations, which are never so heraldically reciprocal. Pray don't let Gatti² persuade you into the gout, but if he does, pray submit to it quietly. You may take out its sting by the bootikins, but if you resist it, it is such a Proteus, that it will slip into the shape of a palsy, and be even with you. Adieu! I am weary, and must bid you good night.

¹ Mr. Bailey, a Scot, who by his wife Griselda was father of Lady Binning, mother of the Earl of Haddington, and of the Countess of

Stanhope. *Walpole.*

² Dr. Gatti, a Florentine physician, who lived long at Paris. *Walpole.*

1584. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 26, 1774.

I BEGIN my letter to-day, to prevent the fatigue of dictating two to-morrow. In the first and best place, I am very near recovered; that is, though still a mummy, I have no pain left, nor scarce any sensation of gout except in my right hand, which is still in complexion and shape a lobster's claw. Now, unless anybody can prove to me that three weeks are longer than five months and a half, they will hardly convince me that the bootikins are not a cure for fits of the gout, and a very short cure, though they cannot prevent it: nor perhaps is it to be wished they should; for if the gout prevents everything else, would not one have something that does? I have but one single doubt left about the bootikins, which is, whether they do not weaken my breast: but as I am sensible that my own spirits do half the mischief, and that, if I could have held my tongue, and kept from talking and dictating letters, I should not have been half so bad as I have been, there remains but half due to bootikins on the balance: and surely the ravages of the last long fit, and two years more in age, ought to make another deduction. Indeed, my forcing myself to dictate my last letter to you almost killed me; and since the gout is not dangerous to me, if I am kept perfectly quiet, my good old friend¹ must have patience, and not insist upon letters from me but when it is quite easy to me to send them. So much for me and my gout. I will now endeavour to answer such parts of your last letters as I can in this manner, and considering how difficult it is to read *your* writing in a dark room.

I have not yet been able to look into the French harangues you sent me. Voltaire's verses to Robert Covelle are not only very bad, but very contemptible.

I am delighted with all the honours you receive, and with all the amusements they procure you, which is the best part of honours. For the glorious part, I am always like the man in Pope's *Donne*,

Then happy he who shows the tombs, said I².

That is, they are least troublesome there. The *Sérénissime*³ you met at Montmorency is one of the least to my taste; we quarrelled about Rousseau, and I never went near him after my first journey. Madame du Deffand will tell you the story, if she has not forgotten it.

It is supposed here that the new proceedings of the French Parliament will produce great effects: I don't suppose any such thing. What America will produce I know still less; but certainly something very serious. The merchants have summoned a meeting for the second of next month, and the petition from the Congress to the King has arrived. The heads have been shown to Lord Dartmouth⁴; but I hear one of the agents is against presenting it; yet it is thought it will be delivered, and then be ordered to be laid before Parliament. The whole affair has already been talked of there on the army and navy days; and Burke, they say, has shone with amazing wit and ridicule on the late inactivity of Gage, and his losing his cannon and straw; on his being entrenched in a town with an army of observation; with that army being, as Sir William Meredith had said, an asylum for magistrates, and to secure the port. Burke said he had heard of an asylum for debtors and whores, never for magistrates; and

² 'Then happy Man who shows the tombs! said I.'—Sat. viii. l. 102.

³ The Prince de Conti. *Walpole*.

⁴ The Colonial Secretary.

of ships, never of armies, securing a port. This is all there has been in Parliament but elections. Charles Fox's place did not come into question. Mr. —⁵, who is one of the new elect, has opened, but with no success. There is a seaman, Luttrell⁶, that promises much better.

I am glad you like the Duchesse de Lauzun: she is one of my favourites. The Hôtel du Châtelet promised to be very fine, but was not finished when I was last at Paris. I was much pleased with the person that slept against St. Lambert's poem: I wish I had thought of the nostrum, when Mr. Seward, a thousand years ago, at Lyons, would read an epic poem to me just as I had received a dozen letters from England. St. Lambert is a great jackanapes, and a very tiny genius. I suppose the poem was *The Seasons*, which is four fans spun out into a Georgic. If I had not been too ill, I should have thought of bidding you hear midnight mass on Christmas Eve in Madame du Deffand's tribune, as I used to do. To be sure, you know that her apartment was part of Madame du Montespan's, whose arms are on the back of the grate in Madame du Deffand's own bedchamber. Apropos, ask her to show you Madame de Prie's picture, M. le Duc's⁷ mistress—I am very fond of it—and make her tell you her history.

I have but two or three words more. Remember my parcel of letters from Madame du Deffand, and pray remember this injunction, not to ruin yourself in bringing presents. A very slight fairing of a guinea or two obliges

⁵ The name is left blank in all the editions. The person in question was probably David Hartley (1732–1813), M.P. for Hull, 'much versed in finances, and friend of Lord Rockingham, had written several political tracts, and was now in Parliament for the first time.' (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 436, note.)

⁶ Hon. John Luttrell (d. 1829), M.P. for Stockbridge; third son of first Baron Irnham (afterwards created Earl of Carhampton); took the additional name of Olmius, 1787; succeeded his brother as third Earl of Carhampton in 1821.

⁷ The Duc de Bourbon.

as much, is more fashionable, and not a moment sooner forgotten than a magnificent one; and then you may very cheaply oblige the more persons; but as the sick fox in Gay's *Fables* says (for one always excepts oneself),

A chicken too might do me good——

I allow you to go as far as three or even five guineas for a snuff-box for me: and then, as ——^s told the King, when he asked for the reversion of the lighthouse for two lives, and the King reproached him with having always advised him against granting reversions; he replied, 'Oh, Sir, but if your Majesty will give me this, I will take care you shall never give away another.'

Adieu, with my own left hand,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1585. TO GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN.

DEAR SIR,

Monday night, 9 o'clock.

I am so much enjoined silence, that it is the more necessary for me to speak to *you*. I am utterly incapable of writing to Paris: I have nobody to write for me, and am not allowed to dictate above two or three lines. It would oblige me infinitely if that might be to you, either at the beginning or end of your letter, if you write to-morrow. One at noon, or seven in the evening, are the cleverest hours for me—but I must not choose.

Yours, &c.,

H. W.

^s So in all the editions; the hero of the anecdote was George Grenville. (See *Memoirs of George III*, ed. 1894, vol. ii. p. 145 and note.)

LETTER 1585.—Not in C.; reprinted from *George Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, vol. iii. p. 39.

1586. TO THE MARQUISE DU DEFFAND.

De Londres, ce 26 Décembre, 1774.

MAIS que vous êtes une drôle d'amie ! Vous avez tout l'air de vous réjouir de ma goutte, car votre première idée est d'en tirer deux lettres par semaine. D'ailleurs vous oubliez la première de toutes les règles, qui est, que c'est le malade qu'on doit ménager, et non pas le malade qui doit ménager ceux qui se portent bien ; maxime échappée à personne depuis Adam, hormis à vous. Voici le fait. Vendredi j'avais été obligé de dicter une grande lettre sur mes affaires, le moment après arrive votre lettre, où vous demandez deux lettres par semaine, l'une pour vous, l'autre pour mon cousin. Votre lettre d'ailleurs étant très agréable, je voulais vous complaire sur-le-champ. Mais n'ayant personne qui sût le français, il fallut m'adresser à M. Conway. Bref, cette fatigue m'épuisa tellement que j'en perdis la voix, la respiration, et le pouls. Mais abrégons. La goutte ne me fait de mal que quand je m'épuise, et je vous prie pour la quatrième fois de vous en ressouvenir.

Actuellement je me porte à merveille. Les bottines ont passé mon attente de cent piques, et je compte vous en envoyer une paire comme un ex-voto pour suspendre dans votre tribune sur la chapelle. Mon cousin vous dira le reste. Il faut me dépêcher, car mon secrétaire¹, qui n'est qu'un visitant, n'a pas du temps de reste.

J'ai envoyé ce matin chez le marchand aux émeraudes : elles sont faites, mais pas polies, et les ouvriers ne veulent pas les achever qu'après les fêtes. Je vous serais très obligé de la nouvelle Ninon, et j'en aurais grande impatience.

LETTER 1586.—Not in C. ; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

¹ Apparently Selwyn. See the previous letter.

Grâces aussi pour le sucre d'orge, et mille fois plus de grâces pour les bonnes nouvelles de Madame d'Olonne². Je vous prie de dire à Milady Aylesbury, que la meilleure manière d'assurer tout ce qu'elle aura acheté de porcelaines de Sève, c'est de l'envoyer directement à notre douane de Londres, adressé à elle-même. Je suis très pressé de recevoir les nouvelles de l'arrivée de vos parents et de votre souper. Ne manquez pas de baiser mille fois la belle petite main de la belle petite grand'maman de ma part, et si vous pouvez sans heurter le front, son joli petit pied aussi. Ne le baisez pas, mais embrassez l'Abbé aussi. Bonsoir, car je n'en puis plus, et mon secrétaire en est bien aise.

P.S. Je ne compte d'écrire à personne avant aujourd'hui en huit.

1587. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 31, 1774.

No child was ever so delighted to go into breeches, as I was this morning to get on a pair of cloth shoes as big as Jack Harris's: this joy may be the spirits of dotage—but what signifies whence one is happy? Observe, too, that this is written with my own *right* hand, with the bootikin actually upon it, which has no distinction of fingers: so I no longer see any miracle in Buckinger, who was famous for writing without hands or *feet* (as if it was indifferent which one uses, provided one has a pair of either). Take notice, I write so much better without fingers than with, that I advise *you* to try a bootikin. To be sure, the operation is a little slower; but to a prisoner, the duration of his amusement is of far more consequence than the vivacity of it.

² A miniature which Walpole wished to buy.

Last night I received your very kind, I might say *your* letter *tout court*, of Christmas Day. By this time I trust you are quite out of pain about me. My fit has been as regular as possible; only, as if the bootikins were post-horses, it made the grand tour of all my limbs in three weeks. If it will always use the same expedition, I am content it should take the journey once in two years. You must not mind my breast: it was always the weakest part of a very weak system; yet did not suffer now by the gout, but in consequence of it; and would not have been near so bad, if I could have kept from talking and dictating letters. The moment I am out of pain, I am in high spirits; and though I never take any medicines, there is one thing absolutely necessary to be put into my mouth—a gag. At present, the town is so empty that my tongue is a sinecure.

I am well acquainted with the Bibliothèque du Roi, and the medals, and the prints. I spent an entire day in looking over the English portraits, and kept the librarian without his dinner till dark night, till I was satisfied. Though the Choiseuls will not *acquaint* with you, I hope their Abbé Barthélemy¹ is not put under the same quarantine. Besides great learning, he has infinite wit and *polissonnerie*, and is one of the best kind of men in the world. As to the grandpapa², *il ne nous aime pas nous autres*, and has never forgiven Lord Chatham. Though exceedingly agreeable himself, I don't think his taste exquisite. Perhaps I was piqued; but he seemed to like Wood³ better than any of us. Indeed, I am a little afraid that my dear friend's impetuous zeal may have been a little too prompt in pressing you upon them *d'abord*:—but don't say a word of this—

LETTER 1587.—¹ The author of the *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis*. Walpole.

² A name given to the Duc de Choiseul by Madame du Deffand. Walpole.

³ Robert Wood, formerly Under Secretary of State, who lived for some time in France.

it is her great goodness.—I thank you a million of times for all yours to her:—she is perfectly grateful for it. The Chevalier's⁴ verses are pretty enough. I own I like Saurin's⁵ much better than you seem to do. Perhaps I am prejudiced by the curse on the Chancellor⁶ at the end.

Not a word of news here. In a sick room one hears all there is, but I have not heard even a lie; but as this will not set out these three days, it is to be hoped some charitable Christian will tell a body one. Lately indeed we heard that the King of Spain had abdicated; but I believe it was some stockjobber that had deposed him.

Lord George Cavendish, for my solace in my retirement, has given me a book, the history of his own Furness Abbey⁷, written by a Scotch ex-Jesuit. I cannot say that this unnatural conjunction of a Cavendish and a Jesuit has produced a lively colt; but I found one passage worth any money. It is an extract of a constable's journal kept during the civil war; and ends thus: 'And there was never heard of such troublesome and distracted times as these five years have been, *but especially for constables.*' It is so natural,

⁴ The Chevalier de Boufflers.

⁵ The verses were as follow:—

*Sur Monsieur de Malesherbes, premier
président de la cour des aides.*

'O! qu'on aime la bonhomie
Qui dans ta grande âme s'allie
Aux grands talents!
Tout Paris fête Malesherbes,
Le plus grand et le moins superbe
Des *revenans* *.

'Jadis l'orateur qu'on renomme,
De l'exil revenu à Rome,
Eut même accueil:
Mais le Cicéron de la France
De l'autre a toute l'éloquence
Sans son orgueil.

'Amis, sa gloire l'embarrasse,
Il faudra pourtant qu'il s'y fasse:

Mais filons doux,
Et nous reposons sur l'histoire;
Sans plus lui parler de sa gloire,
Buvons y tous—

'À celui qui si bien conseille
Son maître, dont il a l'oreille †,
Buvons aussi
A sa santé—Je vous la porte,
Mais disons que le diable emporte
On sçait bien qui!'

⁶ Maupeou.

⁷ *The Antiquities of Furness*, by Thomas West (1720–1779), a Jesuit in charge of the English mission in North Lancashire and Westmoreland.

* The members of the recalled Parliament were called *les revenans*.

† Le Duc de Choiseul. *Walpole*.

that *inconvenient to my Lord Castlecomer* is scarce a better proverb.

Pray tell Lady Ailesbury that though she has been so very good to me, I address my letters to you rather than to her, because my pen is not always upon its guard, but is apt to say whatever comes into its nib; and then if she peeps over your shoulder, I am *censé* not to know it. Lady Harriet's wishes have done me great good: nothing but a father's gout could be obdurate enough to resist them. My Mrs. Damer says nothing to me; but I give her intentions credit, and lay her silence on you.

Jan. 1, 1775, and a happy New Year.

I walk! I walk! walk alone!—I have been five times quite round my rooms to-day, and my month is not up! The day after to-morrow I shall go down into the dining-room; the next week to take the air; and then if Mrs. ———⁸ is very pressing, why, I don't know what may happen. Well! but you want news, there are none to be had. They think there is a ship lost with Gage's dispatches. Lady Temple gives all her diamonds to Miss Nugent⁹. Lord Pigot lost 400*l.* the other night at Princess Amelia's. Miss Davis has carried her cause against Mrs. Yates, and is to sing again at the Opera. This is all my coffee-house furnished this morning.

1588. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 1, 1775.

THIS morning, Madam, as soon as my eyes opened, Philip stood before me, bearing in one hand a shining vest, and in

⁸ The name is left blank in all the editions.

⁹ Hon. Mary Elizabeth Nugent, only daughter and heiress of Robert Nugent, Viscount Clare (created Earl

Nugent in 1776); m. (1775) George Grenville, afterwards Earl Temple and Marquis of Buckingham; d. 1812.

the other a fair epistle, written in celestial characters, which, however, it was given me to understand.

The present, I saw, came from no mortal hand, and seemed to be the boon of all the gods, or rather of all the goddesses ; for there was taste, fancy, delicacy, flattery, wit, and sentiment in it, and so artfully blended, that no celestial in breeches could possibly have mixed so bewitching a potion. Venus had chosen the pattern, Flora painted the roses after those at Paphos, Minerva had worked the tambour part, Clio wrote the ode, and Thalia took off the majestic stiffness of the original sketch by breathing her own ease all over it.

These visions naturally presented themselves. I told you, Madam, I was but just awake, and at that hour, somehow or other, one's head is very apt to be full of Venus and such pretty figures. Vanity soon took their place, and, not to be unworthy of my visitants, I held up my head, and thought it became so favoured a personage as myself to assume a loftier port, and behave like my predecessors who had been honoured in the same manner.

Was I more like Æneas when his mother brought him armour of heavenly temper, or like Paris when three divinities exerted all their charms and all their artifices to ensnare his partiality ? To be sure I could have been simple enough to be content with the character of Horatius Flaccus, with which my patronesses had hailed me ; but when I ordered Philip to reach me my lyre, that I might pour out a rapturous epode or secular hymn in gratitude, he said, ' Lord ! Sir, you know Horace's lyre is at Amptill.'

What follows is more melancholy. I rose ; the first object was to examine more attentively the inspired vest in the full sun against which it shone gorgeously ; but, alas ! as I crept to the window, in the glass I beheld—what do you think, Madam ?—such an emaciated, wan, wrinkled, poor skeleton, that—O ! adieu, visions, goddesses, odes, vests of roses, and

immortal Strawberry!—I thought I saw a thinner Don Quixote attired by the Duchess for sport. Shocked, sunk from my altitudes, and shrinking into myself, I bade Philip Pança fold up the vest, and vowed never to dress up my ghost-like Adonis, but to consecrate the dear work of dear fingers to the single word (I will believe in the charming ode) Friendship; and may the memory of that word, the vest and the ode, exist when Strawberry Hill, its tinsel glories and its master, are remembered nowhere else!

1589. TO JOHN CRAUFURD.

Arlington Street, Jan. 2, 1775.

I WAS not surprised, but rather the more grateful because I was not surprised, at your kind letter. I am totally recovered, excepting my right hand: I walk without a stick; nay, am told look as well as ever I did, which never could be a compliment to me in any part of my life. However, as I advance with dignity I shall descend to the first floor but to-morrow, finding it in vain to wait till I am *sent for*; a mishap that has befallen greater folk than me. Still I am content with being confined but five weeks, instead of five months; and though it will make the faculty more violent than ever against the bootikins, me at least they shall not persuade out of them; and though they will be ready to poison me for speaking the truth, it shall not be by any of their own potions.

I hope you have been diverted with your tour, and I am sure you are always the better for being diverted. I have received a charming present, and more charming verses from Ampthill. You shall see both at your return, if you have not already seen them.

LETTER 1589.—Collated with original in possession of Mr. John W. Ford.

Tuesday, 3rd.

*Cybèle va descendre*¹; that is, an old woman, or an old man, which is the same thing, is come downstairs and writes to you with her own hand, which goddesses never do but when they assume a mortal shape, and then billets-doux and all the rest follow of course. Indeed, there is more of the goddess than the woman in my partiality for you. I doubt your *petite santé* would tempt no ancient dame to choose you for her Atys, though a divinity who would know the goodness of your heart would prefer you to Hercules. All this rigmarole only to tell you I am much better, and

Very sincerely yours,

H. WALPOLE.

1590. TO THE MARQUISE DU DEFFAND.

De Londres, ce 4 Janvier, 1775.

VOTRE dernière lettre étoit tout ce que je pouvois désirer, et je vous en remercie: mais celle de my Lady Ailesbury, que je recus avec, ne me plut nullement. Elle dit que vous vous êtes tellement épuisée à votre fête, que vous en avez pensé mourir. J'espère qu'on n'exilera plus vos parens, si le retour doit vous tant coûter¹. Vous pouvez vous tranquilliser entièrement sur mon état; il ne me reste que de l'enflure à la main droite, et cependant je m'en sers actuellement, bien qu'enveloppée de la bottine: M. Wiart ne reconnoitra pas mon écriture; à force d'être difficile, elle est meilleure. Je marche sans béquille et sans aide, mais il est vrai que je suis encore très foible, et bien plus Revenant que

¹ These words occur in Quinault's opera *Atys*; they were probably quoted by Walpole from the letter of Madame de Sévigné to Madame de Grignan of Aug. 6, 1677.

LETTER 1590.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim* from

original in Walpole's handwriting in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

¹ The Duc and Duchesse de Choiseul had returned to Paris for the first time since the Duke's fall from power.

vos parlementaires. Mais je me repose assez : La Ville est deserte à l'heure qu'il est ; et de ceux qui y sont, Je n'en recois que très peu. C'étoit la mode il y a deux ans de me visiter. Toutes les belles, toutes les grandes Dames vinrent ici à l'envi : actuellement j'affiche la langueur ; et me suis excusé sinon à mes Amis intimes.

Voici Mercredi au soir, et ce Diable d'homme ne m'a pas encore apporté les émeraudes. J'ai peur de manquer le Coche de Douvres. Couty² m'a rendu ce matin deux grilles et quatre livres de Thè, qui iront dans la meme Caisse.

Mes parens vous auront dit le grand parti qui s'est offert pour leur Niece my Lady Francoise³. C'est une très aimable Fille et très jolie. Toutes ces Cousines le sont.

Je n'ai pas été fâché de l'absence de mes parens. J'aime à être tout seul dans les souffrances. Je sais exactement comment il faut me traiter. Il ne faut que le silence et un régime extrêmement froid. Dans ce pais cy tout le Monde s'y oppose et me preche. Je n'aime que des Domestiques obeissans, et certainement je n'ai pas envie de me tuer. Vous voyez que je m'y connois, et me suis guéri bien promptement. Encore suis-je très content du séjour qu'ils ont fait à Paris, des honneurs, des politesses, des bontés, qu'ils y ont recus. Je suis charmé qu'ils ont fait connoissance avec vous, et qu'ils ont le bonheur de vous plaire. A present je commence à desirer leur retour, et je vous prie de leur donner congé.

Ce jeudy 5.

Comme le Carosse de Douvres part demain, et ne passe qu'une fois par semaine, j'avois peur que les Emeraudes n'y seroient pas à temps ; mais les voici ; le Marchand me les

² The brother of one of Madame du Deffand's servants, who was in the service of the Earl of Carlisle.

³ Lady Frances Seymour Conway, fourth daughter of first Earl of

Hertford ; m. (May 22, 1775) Henry Fiennes Pelham-Clinton, eldest son of second Duke of Newcastle. Lord Lincoln died in 1778, in his father's lifetime.

a apporté ce matin. J'ai peur que vous n'en serez pas exactement contente: Le couvercle de la Jatte est très lourd et mal fait: mais la Jatte fait très bien sans dessus, et tout le reste est très bien. Si j'avois refusé de prendre le couvercle, il auroit fallu attendre encore six mois ou douze; car on fonde très rarement du verre à cet usage, étant passé de mode. Il faut que M. de Trudaine fasse venir la Caisse, qu'on laissera à la Douane de Calais à son adresse. Outre les Verres, vous y trouverez deux grilles et quatre livres de Thè; le tout empaqueté par M. Couty, que j'ai fait venir exprès chez moi.

Le Selwyn a passé toute la soiree d'hier chez moi, et meme soupe, c'est à dire a mangé des biscuits et moi des pommes cuites. Votre petit Ami⁴ court la compagne: Aujourd'hui chez my Lady Spencer, demain chez les Ossory. Moi je ne compte de sortir au plutot avant la Semaine qui vient.

Ce Vendredy 5⁵.

La main droite va mieux; j'ai oté la bottine, et j'écris ganté. Vous pouvez compter à M. le Duc d'Orleans cette nouvelle preuve de l'excellence des bottines. Dans mon fait c'est de la demonstration; cinq semaines au lieu de cinq mois et demy. Vous m'avez parlé dernièrement d'un projet que vous aviez de diner au lieu de souper: je ne suis pas de cet avis là: Vous vous etes accoutumée depuis si longtems à votre methode ordinaire, que je ne scaurais croire q'un changement vous conviendrait mieux. Peutêtre si vous preniez un petit bouillon à la place de votre Thè, cela vous soutiendrait mieux, et vous empecheroit de trop manger le soir; mais je vous conseillerois pas de rien brusquer. Vous etes tres delicate, et il ne faut pas risquer un changement considerable tout d'un coup.

⁴ John Craufurd, who was a correspondent of Madame du Deffand.

⁵ So in MS.; read 6.

1591. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, Jan. 9, 1775.

I EVERY day intended to thank you for the copy of Nel Gwyn's letter, till it was too late; the gout came, and made me moult my goose-quill. The letter is very curious, and I am as well content as with the original.

It is lucky you do not care for news more recent than the Reformation. I should have none to tell you; nay, nor earlier neither. Mr. Strut's¹ second volume I suppose you have seen. He showed me two or three much better drawings from pictures in the possession of Mr. Ives². One of them made me very happy: it is a genuine portrait of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and is the individual same face as that I guessed to be his in my *Marriage of Henry VI.* They are infinitely more like each other than any two modern portraits of one person by different painters. I have been laughed at for thinking the skull of Duke Humphrey at St. Alban's proved my guess; and yet it certainly does, and is the more like, as the two portraits represent him very bald, with only a ringlet of hair, as monks have. Mr. Strut is going to engrave his drawings.

Yours faithfully,

H. W.

1592. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Jan. 9, 1775.

I WRITE without having anything to say, but what I know you will like better than news. I am quite recovered of the gout, except in the hand I write with, and which you see

LETTER 1591. — ¹ Joseph Strutt (1749–1802), antiquary and artist. The work mentioned is his *Manners, Customs, Arms, Habits, &c. of the*

People of England.

² John Ives (1751–1776), Suffolk Herald Extraordinary.

cannot be very bad. The bootikins have proved themselves to demonstration. I had the gout in both hands, both feet, both elbows, and one wrist, and yet could walk without a stick in less than a month, and have been abroad twice in less than five weeks. It came in each part as rapidly as it could, and went away so too; and though I had some acute pain, much less in quantity than in any fit these ten years. Now, if less pain, and five weeks instead of five months and a half, as the last fit was, be not demonstration, there is none in Euclid.

The bootikins do not cure the gout, but if they defer it, lessen it, shorten it, who would not wear them? Why, fine people, younger people, who will not condescend to lie like a mummy; nay, nor anybody else, for the physicians and apothecaries, who began by recommending them, now, finding they are a specific, cry them down—and will be believed, precisely because they lie; they say they weaken; it is false; I can at this moment stamp on the marble hearth with both feet with no more inconvenience than I did at five-and-twenty, which I never saw one other person that could do, who had the gout a twelvemonth before. I do this ten times a day, to convince people; yet, what is ocular proof against the assertion of a grave face and a tied wig? If weakness was the consequence, who would be weakened so soon as I, who have bones no bigger than a lark's? I want to send you a cargo of bootikins; tell me the shortest way of conveying them. Your brother is one of the bigoted infidels; can one wonder that the three professions make so many dupes, when pain cannot open the understanding? Sure the devil's three names of Satan, Beelzebub, and Lucifer, were given to him in his three capacities of priest, physician, and lawyer! It is certainly true that there are apothecaries in London who have given noxious drugs under the name of James's powders, to decry the latter. I did not

think there could be a *trade* so bad as a *profession*, till I heard that the fishmongers in town here fling away great quantities of fish that it may never be cheap. What a wicked monster is a great metropolis!

I rejoice that you have resolved to avow your *nepotism*: it may be a bar to your obtaining the Papacy, but sounds well in this Protestant country, and I am sure will turn out to your mind's satisfaction, though it may be a little interruption to your quiet.

This is a short letter, but I call it an intercalated one. There will probably be enough, and too much to send you soon—but till the Parliament meets, all is suspense! I hope decision will not follow *in haste*! The moment is very big; and if anybody is wise enough to see a quick solution of all the difficulties, they are much more intuitive than my comprehension.

Lord Lincoln¹ marries my cousin, Lady Frances Conway²; she is a sweet young woman in person, temper, and understanding, and deserves such vast fortune. Adieu!

1593. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 12, 1775.

You wanted to see my handwriting again, Madam, and now you will be tired of it; but I have this instant received Miss Vernon's pretty fable and verses, and can I help thanking her and you as quick as possible? There is a natural simplicity in her fable, that pleases me infinitely more, than if she had gathered a nosegay of poetic words, and only disposed them in a new garland, as young shepherdesses that read romances generally do, and without genuine invention.

LETTER 1592. — ¹ Eldest son of Henry Clinton, Duke of Newcastle. *Walpole*.

² Fourth daughter of Francis Sey-

mour Conway, Earl of Hertford, nephew of Catherine Shorter, Lady Walpole, first wife of Sir Robert. *Walpole*.

As she shows parts and observation, the embroidery will come of itself afterwards. To the praises she bestows on me, I am very sensible, because I am sure they flow from a kind and amiable heart,—rather, from a complimentary one; but pray, Madam, tell her that I have neither acquired fame nor can bestow it, and that my name is Horace, only because I had godfathers and godmothers, and not because I have the least resemblance to a very great poet so called, any more than I should have to the apostle, if I had been christened Matthew. When I am likened to my heathen predecessor, it only reminds me of my infinite inferiority, and would not be allowed anywhere but at the puppet-show-Parnassus at Bath-Easton. I have just got Mrs. Miller's bouquet of artificial flowers¹, and have only had time to dip upon it, and see how very ridiculous compliments undeserved may make one! You will there see how immortality is plentifully promised to riddles and *bouts-rimés*, and a jar dressed up with ribbons. I once did wish for fame, I own—now I dread it; for it is like diamonds, of little value, unless of the first water,—and who would be fine in Bristol stones?

Pray, Madam, send me all the productions of Amptill. Everything is agreeable of one's own society, and when it means to go no farther. I think this is all that is left me that I care for, or have any eagerness about,—and I am sure that I read with any pleasure. What should I read else? I know all that can be told me of the periods I delight in. I can scarce read Grammont and Madame de Sévigné, because I know them by heart. Can I pore over American disputes, which I never did nor ever shall understand? Do I care for hearing how many ways Mr. Burke can make a mosaic pavement or an inlaid cabinet? Can

LETTER 1593. — ¹ *Poetical Amusements at a Villa near Bath*, a selection

from the compositions read at Bath-easton.

I be diverted with Mr. Cumberland's comedies, or Garrick's nonsensical epilogues? No! truly. I am almost as sick of our literature, as of our politics and politicians; and, therefore, if you have any charity, my Lady, send me all the Ampthilliana, or rather bring them to Grosvenor Place, which I promise to be reconciled to, and where we will not make a Helicon of tin and a Parnassus of pasteboard. Let us leave the whole Castalian state to the Bufos and Bufesses, and divert ourselves without trusting posterity with our secrets.

1594. TO THE EARL OF HARDWICKE.

MY LORD,

Arlington Street, Jan. 12th, 1775.

Though I was so unfortunate as to be able to send your Lordship an immediate answer to the honour you offered me¹, yet having company with me I could not do it in a manner satisfactory to myself, as I had not time to state to your Lordship the particular reasons I have for declining what would do so much credit to my press and me, as printing anything furnished by your Lordship.

I will not trouble you, my Lord, with recapitulating many private reasons that have induced me to put a stop to my press, which has not worked in a manner for these two years. I even two months ago gave my printer warning to provide for himself, having no farther use for him: and though it is true that I have retained him since, by the occasion I had for him as a secretary to write my letters during the incapacity of my hand in the gout, yet it is with no present thoughts of employing him again in his pro-

LETTER 1594.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. George Pritchard.

¹ Lord Hardwicke asked Walpole

to reprint at the Strawberry Hill Press the State Papers of Sir Dudley Carleton, first published by that Lord in 1757.

fession. But indeed the insurmountable difficulty I have in gratifying myself with the flattering employment of printing for your Lordship is this (and one material cause of my suspending my press)—I have been earnestly requested by a near relation to print a work, which was not agreeable to me to print, though offensive to nobody; and the chief argument I urged was the bulk of it. Now your Lordship's candour I am sure will do me the justice to allow that I deprive myself of one of my chief pleasures, that of contributing to the publication of historic pieces, when I deny myself the satisfaction of serving you in that light. I could not print them without exposing myself to a rupture with one of my own family. I trust your Lordship will not mention this, as I should not have uttered it, but to prove my inability of obeying you—for I could not content myself with pleading to you, my Lord, what has been another cause of my interrupting my press, the laziness and indifference to even literary amusements, which age and the gout have brought upon me. You would have tempted me, my Lord, to renew them, if such strong motives did not restrain me.

I beg to know what the *Catalogue* is your Lordship means. I conclude the *Anecdotes of Painting*; but I would not send them till I was sure.

The print of Monsieur de Choiseul is a general, but very imperfect likeness; with nothing of the countenance, and as little of his vivacity; the person is very much his. The present King of France is exceedingly like, my Lord; and like the Duke of Grafton too, as you have heard. I can scarce discover the least distant resemblance to the Queen, who is as strangely like the present Duchess of Grafton, though infinitely better.

I cannot at present, my Lord, recollect where there is any miniature or wax cast of my father, that is to be parted

with ; if I can hear of any such thing your Lordship shall know.

I have the honour to be

With great respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient

Humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1595. TO THE MARQUISE DU DEFFAND.

De Londres, ce 13 Janvier, 1775.

EN toute verité je vous assure que je n'ai pas pensé à vous faire des menaces. Je vous ai dit en badinant que je ne voulois vous écrire de huit jours—et voila ou me fait tomber le malheur de ne pas écrire dans ma propre langue. Si je ne parle pas toujours d'un sérieux phlegmatique, votre méfiance naturelle vous fait soupçonner que je suis de mauvaise humeur—je ne sçais pas de remede, et il faut se soumettre à ces contretems. Au moins vous voyez que je ne me fache pas aujourd'hui.

Non, assurément, mon cousin ne gardera pas votre Madame de Prie¹. Vous me l'aviez offert, et je n'ai pas voulu vous l'oter—mais puisque vous la donnez, je pretends qu'elle est à Moi comme plus ancien en date. Ne vous donnez plus de peine sur Madame d'Olonne ; vous en avez deja trop pris. Je vous prie seulement de me la faire acheter à la vente, si le priz ne passe pas cent Louis ou environ, ce qui seroit bien payer sa fantaisie ; mais j'ai peur que je ne l'aurai pas. Il y a un Mons^r d'Henri ou bien d'Heneri, demeurant dans la meme rue avec le Chevalier Lambert, et tout près de

LETTER 1595.—Not in C. ; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's handwriting

in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

¹ A miniature.

De Londres
le 10 Janv. 1775.

En toute vérité je vous assure que je n'ai pas pensé à vous faire des menaces. Je vous ai dit en badinant que je ne voulois vous écrire de huit jours - & voilà qui me fait tomber le malheur de ne pas écrire dans ma propre langue. Si je ne parle pas toujours d'un sérieux phlegmatique, votre confiance naturelle vous fait soupçonner que je suis de mauvaise humeur - je ne sais pas de remède, il faut se soumettre à ces contredans. Au moins vous voyez que je ne me fâche pas aujourd'hui.

Non, assurément, Mon Cousin ne gardera pas votre Madame de Die. Vous me l'avez offert, & je n'ai pas voulu vous l'oter - mais puisque vous la donnez, je prétends qu'elle est à moi comme plus ancien créancier. Ne vous donnez plus de peine sur Madame D'Olonne; vous en avez déjà trop pris. Je vous prie seulement de me la faire acheter à la vente, si la prix ne passe pas cent Louis ou environ, ce qui seroit bien payer sa fantaisie; mais j'ai peur que je ne l'aie pas. Il y a un mort d'Henri ou bien d'Henri, demeurant dans la même rue avec le Chevalier Lambert, & tout près de l'hôtel de Richelieu, & qui achète à tort & à travers tous les ouvrages soi-disants de Petitot, qui me l'emportera, & j'en serai fâché. Il y avoit encore un monsieur

que j'ai vu chez vous, & dont j'ai oublié le nom, mais il a de grands
sourils noirs; il achète aussi des Petitsots, & me proposa un jour
venir voir ses tableaux; mais c'est trop vous importuner, & je n'en
vous en parlerai plus. Je suis encore fâché de vous avoir dérangé
la vie de Ninon, puisque elle est ancienne: c'est sans doute celle
dont j'ai tiré ma feuille dans la Monde, & que je sais par cœur.

Je viens enfin de recevoir de la part de l'Exécuteur Testa-
mentaire de mon Tasse Trois cent vingt sept livres Sterling, &
shelings & six sous, sur le compte de Madame la Maréchale de
Mirepoix, le dernier paiement qu'elle touchera. L'entrepreneur
s'est payé cinq guinées, & c'est très raisonnable - donc il n'en
reste pour Madame que trois cent vingt deux livres, Sept shel-
& six sous. Je crois que la meilleure manière de faire toucher
l'argent à mad. la Maréchale, ce sera si mon lousin veut bien avoir
la complaisance de la lui payer, & que son Banquier s'adresse
moi pour le remboursement - mais alors il faudra que mad.
de Mirepoix paie à mon lousin ce qu'il perdra par les frais de
l'échange, car je ne veux point qu'il paie la Dame à son pro-
pre dépens. Je vous prie d'arranger cela avec lui avant qu'il en parle
à la Maréchale.

Je trouve l'épigramme de Voltaire fort plaisant. On ne m'a pas en-
voyé les trois exclamations; & m. l'abbé, que je sais arrivée, ne m'a
rien dit de Ninon, mais je la lui enverrai, si je n'en entends pas plus.

On m'a dit hier que notre petit Ami a la Goutte chez My Lady.

Spencer, & la prie sur un tabouret. Mad. Greville est haud d'ici elle
répond de ce qu'il fera au printemps.

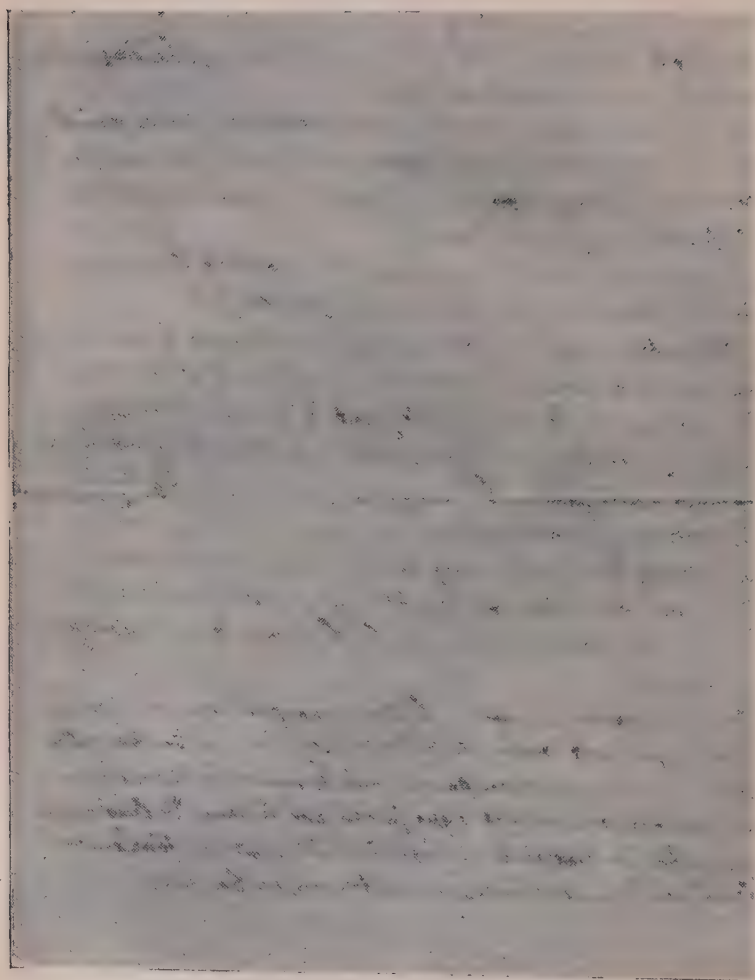
Je vous prie d'assurer Mad. de Somsac combien je suis sensible
à son souvenir; c'est l'une des personnes en France pour qui j'ai la
plus de estime, bien que j'en n'y aie pas fait quatre vingt dix
lois d'années comme M. Conway.

J'oubliois de vous dire que je suis très content des Vers du
Chevalier dans la Japane. Tout ce qu'il fait est joli.

Ma goutte s'en va on ne peut pas plus lentement. Je marche
très mal, je monte mal un escalier & je descends avec plus de
difficulté encore. Je ne quitte le gant de la main droite que pour
écrire, & j'ai fait demander permission à la Princesse d'Orléans de
le garder quand j'aurai l'honneur de jouer avec elle lundi.

Je me mets ma parfaite guérison au mois prochain, quand j'ai compté
d'aller passer huit jours à une campagne de Mylord Hertford
à deux pas de la mer, & à vingt lieues de Londres. L'air de la
mer me fait autant de bien que les Coliques, & mille fois plus
rapidement.

Je suis très étendu aujourd'hui. La campagne politique s'ouvrira la
semaine qui vient, & alors la ville se remplira. J'ai des nouvelles
assez amusantes pour nos pères, mais comme elles ne sont point
politiques & ne concerneront, & que je n'ai pas le temps de leur écrire
aujourd'hui, je les garderai jusqu'à mardi. C'est l'histoire d'une
société poétique dont je me suis fort amusé. Bon soir.



l'hôtel de Richelieu, et qui achète à tort et à travers tous les ouvrages soi disants de Petitot, qui me l'emportera, et j'en serai fâché. Il y avait encore un monsieur que j'ai vu chez vous, et dont j'ai oublié le nom, mais il a de grands sourcils noirs ; il achète aussi des Petitots, et me proposa un jour de venir voir ses tableaux ; mais c'est trop vous importuner, et je ne vous en parlerai plus. Je suis encore fâché de vous avoir demandé la vie de Ninon, puisqu'elle est ancienne : c'est sans doute celle dont j'ai tiré ma feuille dans le Monde², et que je sais par cœur.

Je viens enfin de recevoir de la part de l'Exécuteur Testamentaire de M. Taaffe Trois cent vingt sept livres Sterling douze Shillings et six Sous, sur le compte de Madame la Marechale de Mirepoix, le dernier paiement qu'elle touchera. L'Entremetteur s'est payé cinq guinées, et c'est très raisonnable—donc il n'en reste pour Madame que trois cent vingt deux livres, sept Shillings, et six sous. Je crois que la meilleure manière de faire toucher cette somme à Mad. la Marechale, ce sera si mon cousin veut bien avoir la Complaisance de la lui paier, et que son Banquier s'adresse à moi pour le remboursement—mais alors il faudra que Madame de Mirepoix paie à mon cousin ce qu'il perdra par les frais de l'échange, car je ne veux pas qu'il paie la Dame à son propre dépens. Je vous prie d'arranger cela avec lui avant que d'en parler à la Marechale.

Je trouve l'épigramme de Voltaire fort plaisant. On ne m'a pas envoyé les trois Exclamations³ ; et M. Clarges, que je sçais arrivé, ne m'a pas rendu la Ninon, mais je la lui demanderai, si je n'entends pas parler.

On m'a dit hier que notre petit ami a la Goutte chez my Lady Spencer, et le piè sur un tabouret. Mad. Greville est hardie si elle répondra de ce qu'il fera au printemps.

² *The World*, No. xxviii. See *Works* of Lord Orford, vol. i. pp. 169–73.

³ The title of an epigram on the journalist Suard.

Je vous prie d'assurer Mad. de Jonsac combien je suis sensible à son Souvenir; c'est Une des personnes en France pour qui j'ai le plus d'estime, bien que je n'y aie pas fait quatre vingt dix Connoissances, comme M. Conway⁴.

J'oubliois de vous dire que je suis tres content des Vers du Chevalier dans la Tasse. Tout ce qu'il fait est joli.

Ma Goute s'en va on ne peut pas plus lentement. Je marche tres mal, je monte mal un escalier et je descends avec plus de difficulté encore. Je ne quitte le gant de la main droite que pour écrire, et j'ai fait demander permission à la Princesse Amelie de le garder quand j'aurai l'honneur de jouer avec Elle Lundy.

Je remets ma parfaite guerison au mois prochain, quand je compte d'aller passer huit jours à une Campagne de my Lord Hertford à deux pas de la mer, et à vingt lieues de Londres. L'air de la mer me fait autant de bien que les bottines, et mille fois plus rapidement.

Je suis très sterile aujourd'hui. La campagne politique s'ouvrira la Semaine qui vient, et alors la ville se remplira. J'ai des nouvelles assez amusantes pour mes parens, mais comme elles ne sont point politiques et se conserveront, et que je n'ai pas le tems de leur écrire aujourd'hui, je les garderai jusqu'à Mardy. C'est l'histoire d'une Société poétique dont je me suis fort amusé⁵. Bon soir.

1596. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY AND
THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 15, 1775.

You have made me very happy by saying your journey to Naples is laid aside. Perhaps it made too great an impression on me; but you must reflect, that all my life

⁴ 'Savez-vous combien il connaît déjà de personnes dans Paris? Quatre-vingt-dix. Il n'est nullement

sauvage.' (Madame du Deffand to Horace Walpole, Jan. 3, 1775.)

⁵ See the following letter.

I have satisfied myself with your being perfect, instead of trying to be so myself. I don't ask you to return, though I wish it: in truth, there is nothing to invite you. I don't want you to come and breathe fire and sword against the Bostonians, like that second Duke of Alva, the inflexible Lord George Germain; or to anathematize the court and all its works, like the incorruptible Burke, who scorns lucre, except when he can buy a hundred thousand acres from naked Caribs for a song. I don't want you to do anything like a party-man. I trust you think of every party as I do, with contempt, from Lord Chatham's mustard-bowl down to Lord Rockingham's hartshorn. All, perhaps, will be tried in their turns, and yet, if they had genius, might not be mighty enough to save us. From some ruin or other I think nobody can, and what signifies an option of mischiefs?

An account is come of the Bostonians having voted an army of sixteen thousand men, who are to be called *minute-men*, as they are to be ready at a minute's warning. Two directors or commissioners, I don't know what they are called, are appointed. There has been too a kind of mutiny in the Fifth Regiment. A soldier was found drunk on his post. Gage, in this time of *danger*, thought rigour necessary, and sent the fellow to a court-martial. They ordered two hundred lashes. The General ordered them to improve their sentence. Next day it was published in the *Boston Gazette*. He called them before him, and required them on oath to abjure the communication: three officers refused. Poor Gage is to be scapegoat¹, not for this, but for what was a reason against employing him, incapacity. I wonder at the precedent! Howe² is talked of for his successor.—Well, I have done with *you*!—Now I shall go gossip with Lady Aylesbury.

LETTER 1596.—¹ Gage was not deprived of command on this occasion.

² Major-General Hon. William

Howe; he was sent out with reinforcements for Gage in March 1775.

You must know, Madam, that near Bath is erected a new Parnassus, composed of three laurels, a myrtle-tree, a weeping-willow, and a view of the Avon, which has been new christened Helicon. Ten years ago there lived a Madam Riggs, an old rough humourist who passed for a wit; her daughter, who passed for nothing, married to a Captain Miller, full of good-natured officiousness. These good folks were friends of Miss Rich³, who carried me to dine with them at Bath-Easton, now Pindus. They caught a little of what was then called taste, built and planted, and begot children, till the whole caravan were forced to go abroad to retrieve. Alas! Mrs. Miller is returned a beauty, a genius, a Sappho, a tenth Muse, as romantic as Mademoiselle Scudéri, and as sophisticated as Mrs. Vesey. The Captain's fingers are loaded with cameos, his tongue runs over with *virtù*, and that both may contribute to the improvement of their own country, they have introduced *bouts-rimés* as a new discovery. They hold a Parnassus fair every Thursday, give out rhymes and themes, and all the flux of quality at Bath contend for the prizes. A Roman vase dressed with pink ribbons and myrtles receives the poetry, which is drawn out every festival; six judges of these Olympic games retire and select the brightest compositions, which the respective successful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope Miller, kiss her fair hand, and are crowned by it with myrtle, with—I don't know what. You may think this is fiction, or exaggeration. Be dumb, unbelievers! The collection is printed, published.—Yes, on my faith! There are *bouts-rimés* on a buttered muffin, made by her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland; receipts to make them by Corydon the venerable, *alias* George Pitt; others very pretty, by Lord Palmerston⁴; some by Lord Carlisle:

³ Daughter of Sir Robert Rich, and sister to the second wife of George, Lord Lyttelton, *Walpole*,

⁴ Henry Temple (1739–1802), second Viscount Palmerston.

many by Mrs. Miller herself, that have no fault but wanting metre; and immortality promised to her without end or measure. In short, since folly, which never ripens to madness but in this hot climate, ran distracted, there never was anything so entertaining or so dull—for you cannot read so long as I have been telling.

Jan. 17.

Before I could finish this, I received your dispatches by Sir Thomas Clarges, and a most entertaining letter in three tomes. It is being very dull, not to be able to furnish a quarter so much from your own country—but what can I do? You are embarked in a new world, and I am living on the scraps of an old one of which I am tired. The best I can do is to reply to your letter, and not attempt to amuse you when I have nothing to say. I think the Parliament meets to-day, or in a day or two—but I hope you are coming.—Your brother says so, and Madame du Deffand says so; and sure it is time to leave Paris, when you know ninety of the inhabitants⁵. There seems much affectation in those that will not know you⁶; and affectation is always a little-ness—it has been even rude; but to be sure the rudeness one feels least is that which is addressed to one before there has been any acquaintance.

Ninon⁷ came, because, on Madame du Deffand's mentioning it, I concluded it a new work, and am disappointed. I can say this by heart. The picture of Madame de Prie⁸, which you don't seem to value (and so Madame du Deffand says), I believe I shall dispute with you; I think it charming, but when offered to me years ago, I would not take it—it was now given to you a little *à mon intention*.

⁵ See p. 132, note 4.

⁶ The Duke de Choiseul. *Walpole*.

⁷ The Life of Ninon de l'Enclos. *Walpole*.

⁸ It is now at Strawberry Hill. *Walpole*.

I am sorry that, amongst all the verses you have sent me, you should have forgotten what you commend the most, *Les trois exclamations*: I hope you will bring them with you. Voltaire's are intolerably stupid, and not above the level of officers in garrison. Some of M. de Pezay's⁹ are very pretty, though there is too much of them; and in truth I had seen them before. Those on Madame de la Vallière pretty too, but one is a little tired of Venus and the Graces. I am most pleased with your own¹⁰—and if you have a mind to like them still better, make Madame du Deffand show you mine¹¹, which are neither French, nor measure, nor metre. She is unwilling to tell me so; which diverts me. Yours are really genteel and new.

I envy you the Russian anecdotes¹² more than M. de Chamfort's fables, of which I know nothing; and as you say no more, I conclude I lose not much. The stories of Sir Charles¹³ are so far not new to me, that I heard them of him from abroad after he was mad: but I believe no mortal of his acquaintance ever heard them before; nor did they at all correspond with his former life, with his treatment of his wife, or his history with Mrs. Woffington, *qui*

⁹ Alexandre Frédéric Jacques Masson (1741–1777), Marquis de Pezay.

¹⁰ Miss Berry notes that Conway's lines were 'sent with a porcelain *déjeuné* to the Vicomtesse de Cambis at the beginning of the new year, when it was the universal custom at Paris to interchange small presents known by the name of *étrennes*.' The verses were as follow:—

'L'étrenne qu'on vous offre ici
N'est rare ni mignonne;
Mais les vétilles ont du prix
Quand c'est le cœur qui donne.

'De plus encore pour satisfaire
Au scrupule le plus sévère,
Il faut penser qu'en acceptant
C'est vous qui faites le présent.'

¹¹ These lines do not appear. *Walpole*.

¹² A MS. account of the revolution which placed Catherine II on the throne, by Claude Carloman de Rulhière (1735–1791), who had been attached to the French embassy in St. Petersburg. Rulhière occasionally read his anecdotes out loud in private houses. He claimed to give a full account of the whole transaction, and spared no one. His work caused great annoyance to the Empress, who tried in vain to have it suppressed. The anecdotes were printed in 1797, the year after the Empress's death.

¹³ Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. *Walpole*.

n'était pas dupe. I say nothing on the other stories you tell me of billets dropped¹⁴, *et pour cause*.

I think I have touched all your paragraphs, and have nothing new to send you in return. In truth, I go nowhere but into private rooms; for I am not enough recovered to re-launch into the world, when I have so good an excuse for avoiding it. The bootikins have done wonders; but even two or three such victories will cost too dear. I submit very patiently to my lot. I am old and broken, and it never was my system to impose upon myself when one can deceive nobody else. I have spirits enough for my use, that is, amongst my friends and contemporaries: I like young people and their happiness for everything but to live with; but I cannot learn their language, nor tell them old stories, of which I must explain every step as I go. Politics, the proper resource of age, I detest—I am contented, but see few that are so—and I never will be led by any man's self-interest. A great scene is opening, of which I cannot expect to see the end; I am pretty sure not a happy end—so that, in short, I am determined to think the rest of my life but a postscript: and as this has been too long an one, I will wish you good night, repeating what you know already, that the return of you three is the most agreeable prospect I expect to see realized. Adieu!

1597. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Jan. 15, 1775.

I AM glad I opened the letter myself, Madam; I would not have had Kirgate see it for the world, and therefore

¹⁴ This alludes to circumstances Mr. Conway mentions as having taken place at a ball at Versailles. *Walpole*.—A young Vicomte d'Houdetot picked up a letter written by a lady to her lover, and made its

contents public. He was in consequence forbidden by the Queen to appear again at the court balls. (See *Correspondance entre Marie Thérèse et le Comte de Mercy-Argenteau*, vol. ii. pp. 287-8.)

attempt to write an answer in my lap with only one hand. If no man is a hero in the eyes of his *valet de chambre*, what must a miserable author be in those of his printer! You think you have sent me some very pretty verses, Madam, and so you have—very pretty indeed; for poetry can create, paint, or call from the grave, and the less solidity there is in the vision, the more enchanting are its hues: but if truth presents its glass, the rainbow disappears, and nothing remains but what I have found, *Verses on a Death's head*!—and *my immortal fame* may walk perhaps to the publication of the next monthly magazine. In serious earnest, I do think it is such an impertinence in every little scribbler in a parish to accept new year's gifts of immortal fame from their friends, that, at the risk of ingratitude, I must protest against the practice.

As an antiquary, Madam, I am better diverted. I can but imagine how the grave professors of our mystery will be embarrassed a thousand years hence (which is all the portion of futurity in my disposal) to discover who the immortal man was that will live only in your Ladyship's lines. Nay, what if the reverse of your compliment should happen, and the author should only be discovered by his printer! Such mortifications have happened to as great German and Batavian wits as I am, and therefore I beg, Madam, you will treat my co-labourer Kirgate with more respect, as, should fame happen to have a library of rare editions, I may be admitted there only under his auspices. Upon the whole, to your Ladyship and him I commit the whole reversion of my future renown, where I am sure it will be in better hands than in my own; and I do hereby appoint and declare my said loving Muse and faithful printer joint executrix and executor of this my last will and testament, written all with my own hand this fifteenth day of January, in the first and last year of my immortality, and

in the no less immortal reign of G. III, by the want of grace late King of France and America, &c.

1598. TO THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.

SIR,

Jan. 17, 1775.

Your Royal Highness's commands are so much a law to me, that though deeply conscious of the inequality of my understanding to so arduous a question, and full of fears lest a word should drop from me that should lead your Royal Highness into any step prejudicial to yourself, or to the Princesses¹, your daughters, I venture to lay my thoughts at your Royal Highness's feet, only entreating, if they appear to have any weight in them, that your Royal Highness would not adopt them till they have been approved by better judgments than mine.

Before I speak, Sir, on the question whether your Royal Highness should take any measure in Parliament for procuring a provision for your family, permit me, Sir, to state an apprehension that has struck me from the conversation I had the honour of having with you the last time I saw you. Your Royal Highness expressed doubts whether there might not be some idea of calling the legitimacy of your children in question. Alas! Sir, if it is possible that any human mind should have such an idea, would not a motion in Parliament be the likeliest method of bringing that horrid intention into execution? The Parliament is so infamous, that it could, I firmly believe, be brought to lend its assistance to anything. As your Royal Highness's hint of carrying any part of your cause thither has not alarmed, may one not suppose that not alarming, it pleases? What will either House not do? What has either refused to do? Consider,

LETTER 1598.—¹ Princess Sophia Matilda and Princess Caroline Augusta Maria. The latter was born in 1774 and died on March 14, 1775.

Sir, how many would be glad to colour over their mean desertion or neglect of you by calling into question the validity of your marriage, and consequently of the birth of your children. Shame is apt to fly to crimes for a veil. I have no difficulty in speaking on this question: your Royal Highness must authenticate the legitimacy of your children, before you think of a provision for them. I rest it there, Sir, not to trouble you with unnecessary words.

In regard to the question your Royal Highness was pleased to put to me, on some motion for a provision, I will consider it in two lights; in the first, whether it would be proper for any Lords to take it up. This, Sir, I am sorry to say, lies in a small compass, and extends to a very few Lords in the opposition; your Royal Highness knows already my opinion, that a few opposing Lords would only do your cause signal mischief, and would give the pretended sanction, that I fear is wished for, to doing nothing for you; and, therefore, if I am not wrong, not to be attempted. The Duke of R.², with whom I have talked, fears nothing, Sir, but hurting your cause. He is so personally obnoxious, that he thinks a motion from your Royal Highness and himself would only be considered, certainly represented, as factious; his Grace's tenderness and delicacy would not suffer him to add, that none of his friends would support him, though he knows they would not. What could be expected, Sir, from a measure so generally abandoned? When could it be revived with success, unless, not only times, but men should be totally altered?

I can then, Sir, have but one idea left, the same I suggested on Monday, if your Royal Highness should still think the present season a proper one, though it is probable that nothing will be stirred this year in relation to an increase of the revenue of the crown. I must throw myself on your

² The Duke of Richmond.

Royal Highness's great goodness and generosity before I presume to utter what I have further to say. You have indeed, Sir, commanded me, given me leave to speak what I think, and I dare not at such a crisis but speak what I think. Be not offended, Sir; my heart burns to serve you, but I will not waste your time on my idle apologies. My sincerity must be proved by my actions.

I have said, Sir, how infamous I think Parliaments. I have not so bad an opinion of all mankind in general. Humanity can operate when interest is silent. It seems essential, in my opinion, to any future service, that your Royal Highness may reap from a motion in Parliament, that the cry of mankind should be raised loud in your favour. That can only be excited by stating your sufferings and by being able to prove that you have done everything in your power to reconcile his Majesty, and to deprecate his anger. The plan I should humbly offer to your Royal Highness for your conduct will best explain my meaning, laying it before you, Sir, with the utmost deference and diffidence; far from presuming to dictate, but obeying from perfect submission.

I should begin, Sir, by writing an ostensible letter to the King, asking pardon for a natural youthful error, regretting his displeasure, entreating a return of his fraternal affections, stating my own ill-health, and how much that must be augmented by his resentment, and at least imploring he would give that relief to a sick body and wounded mind of promising he would make a proper provision for persons so dear to me as my wife and children. As heightening the picture a little would not add to your Royal Highness's disorder, I would beg the comfort of taking leave of him in so critical a situation of my health. If this should have no effect, Sir, I would just before leaving England, in my place in the House of Lords, acquaint their Lordships, that

I was grieved his Majesty was so much offended at a youthful error, which, as it was neither repugnant to religion nor law at that time, I had flattered myself had not been irremissible; that I had done but what the heir of the crown, James II, when Duke of York, had done, and been forgiven, and what had very frequently been done by other princes of the royal blood, and by kings of England themselves; that I had never refused any match that had been proposed, and had only chosen for myself when no wife had been sought for me; that I had preferred legal matrimony to the dissoluteness of youth; that I had selected a woman of blameless virtue, and that I had done what their Lordships could not disapprove,—I had chosen a lady from their own class, into which Princes of the blood used to marry. I would then acquaint them with the steps I had in vain taken for reconciliation. I would entreat them to be mediators with the King for remission of my fault in marrying without his approbation: I would acquaint them with the precarious state of my health, which obliged me to leave the kingdom and my family unprovided for, and I would beg them, as Christian Peers and his Majesty's Great Council, to endeavour to repair the breaches in the royal family; and if anything should happen to me, to intercede with his Majesty's piety and forgiveness to make a suitable provision for two innocent young Princesses of his own blood, who had never offended him; and I would add, that to avoid any suspicion of intending to disturb his Majesty's mind, I declined making any present Parliamentary application for my children, but would leave to the wisdom of their Lordships to take the most proper time of being intercessors for me and my family with my royal brother. This address, Sir, to the Lords I would deliver in writing, and would desire it might be entered on the Journals; I would then retire and leave them.

But now, Sir, after taking such a latitude of liberty, whom shall I entreat to be intercessor for me with your Royal Highness? Your own excellent heart, Sir. No, you cannot be offended at zeal, even if it has passed its due bounds. On my soul, Sir, I think that what I have said is the best method I can desire for obtaining your Royal Highness's object. No high-flown loyalty nor grovelling self-interest has dictated my words. If Parliament is against you, the majority of mankind must be gained over by acting as they would advise. If I advise you, Sir, to stoop beyond what your Royal Highness would suggest, it is for the sake of your children, who will plead when I fail. If you are in the right in the world's eye, whatever it costs your feeling, it will be of use to them. The circumstances may change; your health, I trust in God, will be re-established, and the more sacrifices you have made, the higher you will stand in the esteem of mankind. I still flatter myself you will enjoy all the happiness and dignity due to your virtues and birth. I am not likely to see that moment, nor should I profit by it if I did,—but I have done my duty as your true servant, and if I was now at my last hour, I could not give you any other advice than what I now presume to lay at your feet.

P.S. If your Royal Highness should deem this advice timid, I beg, Sir, it may be tried by this test, whether your Royal Highness thinks that any one of your enemies would be glad I had given this advice: undoubtedly, Sir, the more you take care to be in the right yourself, the more you put those who hurt you with the King in the wrong.

1599. TO THE MARQUISE DU DEFFAND.

De Londres, ce 19 Janvier, 1775.

JE puis vous assurer avec la plus grande vérité que non seulement mes parens sont infiniment contents de vous, mais qu'ils vous admirent et qu'ils vous aiment autant que vous le méritez. C'est ce qu'ils repetent trop souvent pour que j'en doute. De leur côté quelle raison d'être contents ! Jamais on n'a tant fait pour des Etrangers ! Il me paroît que M. Conway seroit charmé de s'établir a Paris. Oui, je leur ferai force questions ; mais ils ont bien passé le cercle de mes Connoissances.

Votre menagement poli pour mes couplets m'a fort diverti. Je m'attendois à vous entendre crier qu'ils étoient les plus plats et les plus ridicules du monde. Vous n'avez jamais eu à vous reprocher trop de complaisance pour mes ouvrages — pourquoi épargner mes vers Français ? Pensez vous que je les ai crû bons ? Je scavois bien qu'ils étoient detestables. C'est mon cousin qui en fait de jolis — je trouve très jolis ceux qu'il a fait pour Madame de Cambis. J'ai trouvé ceux de votre fête fort bien aussi, cependant pas admirables. Mais il n'y a rien ou nous differons davantage qu'en fait de vers. J'ai tort sans doute, car assurément vous devez juger votre langue mieux que moi.

Permettez vous que faute d'autre Matière, je remplisse le reste de ma lettre avec des nouvelles Politiques pour mon Cousin ? Voilà donc que les affaires en Amerique vont au plus mal. On y envoie encore trois autres Regiments. On va demander au parlement, qui s'est assemblé aujourd'hui, six mille Matelots dont on n'a pas voulu il y a un mois. Cela ne paroît pas fort consequent — mais voici ce qui est bien plus étrange, et qui n'a pas l'air guerrier. On annonça

LETTER 1599.—Not in C.; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's hand-writing in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

hier par autorité, c'est à dire par la sienne, que my Lord Chatham doit se présenter à la Chambre des Pairs pour faire une proposition. On a été très curieux de savoir ce que ce devoit être que cette Proposition, et on assure que la voici. Autorisé par le Docteur Franklin (mon cousin vous dira qui c'est) le seigneur Chatham doit offrir au Roi de la part des Colonies trois cent cinquante mille livres Sterling par an, moyennant l'abolition des Taxes et des Edits qui gravent l'Amerique. On pretend qu'on s'en mocquera — cependant on rit à contre-cœur.

My Lord North a présenté ce matin à la Chambre un Cahier énorme de papiers Américains, demandant qu'on les examine aujourd'hui en huit.

Vous voilà aussi savante que pas un Politique dans nos Caffés. Hier la Cour étoit en gala jour de la Reine. Les habits étoient d'une magnificence extraordinaire, et les plumes des Dames un peu Emule des Votres. A trois heures après midy arriva un brouillard si épais que personne ne scait trouver son carosse, et grand fut le bruit, l'embarras qui survint, avec beaucoup de dommage fait aux Equipages. Le Valet du Ministre de Prusse renversa à coups de poing un Grenadier à la Porte du Palais ; le ministre se plaint au Colonel de ce qu'on s'étoit assuré de la personne du Laquais. 'Monsieur, dit le colonel, que croyez vous qu'on eut fait à un Anglois qui eut frappé un grenadier à la porte du Palais de Berlin ?' Nous sommes plus polis ; on a relâché le Domestique.

Voilà un Echantillon d'une lettre Angloise. Je ne crois pas que vous demanderez une Suite.

Le 20.

Tout est changé aujourd'hui : on dit que my Lord Chatham va demander qu'on augmente l'Armée par terre et par mer. Je ne saurai la Verité qu'après la Poste partie, ce qui est plus sûr, c'est ce que le Ministère s'est décidé pour la Guerre, et qu'on menace les Colonies d'une punition très rude.

Vos emeraudes content cinq Louis et demy. Il me semble que mes lettres sont comme les Cours, remplis de grandes et de petites choses.

1600. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 21, 1775.

No ; I will never read nonsense again with a settled resolution of being diverted ! The *Miscellany* from Bath-Easton is ten degrees duller than a magazine, and, which is wondrous, the noble authors it adds to my *Catalogue* are the best of this foolish Parnassus. There is one very pretty copy by Lord Palmerston ; and the Duchess of Northumberland has got very jollily through her task. I have scarce been better diverted by Dr. Johnson's *Tour to the Western Isles*. What a heap of words to express very little ! and though it is the least cumbrous of any style he ever used, how far from easy and natural ! He hopes nobody but is glad that a boatful of sacrilege, a diverting sin ! was shipwrecked. He believes in second sight, and laughs at poor Pennant for credulity ! The King sent for the book in MS., and then wondering, said, 'I protest, Johnson seems to be a Papist and a Jacobite !'—so he did not know why he had been made to give him a pension !

I must cross the sea, Madam, if I tell you anything better, and so I will. One of the ladies to the Queen of France announced to her that the Comtesse d'Artois was breeding. The Queen was a little piqued and envious ; and to conceal it said, 'I wonder what the child will be called ?' The lady answered, 'I hope, Madam, *le Précurseur*.'

This story is only the precursor of one ten thousand times better, which I reserved. The Comte d'Artois, forgetting that his brother is King, treats him with all the familiarity of their nursery. It was thought necessary to correct this ;

and M. de Maurepas was commissioned to give the hint. Being urged, he said the King would grow offended. 'Well,' said the Prince, 'and if he is, *que peut-il me faire?*' '*Vous pardonner, Monseigneur,*' replied the minister. If you don't admire this more than any reply in your Diogenes Laertius and ancient authors, I will never tell your Ladyship another modern story.

Well! I am come back to England, and here I find no bad saying of an English Queen. The crowd at the Birthday was excessive, and had squeezed, and shoved, and pressed upon the Queen in the most hoyden manner. As she went out of the Drawing-room, somebody said in flattery, 'The crowd was very great.'—'Yes,' said the Queen, 'and wherever one went, the Queen was in everybody's way.'

I have written this since I came home to-night, Thursday, on my way towards Saturday's post, that I might not forget the *bons mots* I had collected for my gazette. To-morrow, I expect, will produce longer speeches.

I know what I know. To-morrow is to happen a great event¹—I will not tell you what, till I know myself what it does produce. If it was not too late for the post, I would send away my letter this instant, that I might keep your Ladyship and Lordship in expectation for a whole night. Now I think of it, I can send it away to-morrow, and keep all Amptill in equal suspense. I believe I shall—I don't know whether I shall or not—well, I will consider of it.

Saturday evening².

Oh, the pretty easy affectionate verses! but I beg your pardon for not returning them last night: I had not time, for I had dined out, and did not receive them till the post

LETTER 1600.—¹ Lord Chatham's motion to address the King for the recall of the troops from Boston.

² Hitherto printed as a separate letter. (See *Notes and Queries*, April 14, 1900.)

was gone. But the great event—well, it must stay,—I cannot drop Lord Ossory so. Madam, madam, if your heart did not cry its eyes out, it is rock and flint, and all the hard things ladies' hearts used to be made of. Mine, that has hardly any eyes or ears left, was charmed with the harmony and touched with the sensibility. I forgive the dairy next door to the hospital, and don't wonder that

With such a companion to tend a few sheep,
To rise up and play, and to lie down and sleep³,
you have no taste for anything but milking cows. The ten last lines have more feeling and sentiment than ever were written by lovers, and are a better sermon in behalf of marriage than all that has been preached from St. Paul to St. Whitfield. I have not kept a copy, because I never break my trust, but I do ask them seriously, only desiring the first line, which has a foot too much, may be shortened, and they will be perfect, which they ought to be, when they are so near it.

Alas! the great event was addled, or came to little. I had been told that Lord Chatham was commissioned by Dr. Franklin to offer the King 350,000*l.* a year from America if the offensive bills were repealed. The ministers thought he was to ask for an increase of force, so their intelligence was at last no better than mine! But, indeed, who could guess what he would do? He did appear, and did move to address for a recall of the troops from Boston, a very Pindaric transition from the first step towards a pacification to the last! In heroic poems it is a rule to begin in the middle, and great poets and great orators are very like in more instances than one. He was very hostile, and so was Lord Camden; but the generals being braver than the troops, some of the latter ran away,

³ From John Byrom's verses beginning, 'My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent.'

as Colonel Coventry and Cornet Grosvenor. The numbers were 68 to 18. The Duke of Cumberland, who would have joined his regiment, if it had been raised, to the vanquished, was among the slain; but in truth the subject is a little too serious for joking. The war on America is determined on. Four regiments more are ordered thither, and every hostile measure is to be pursued. The wise measures of last year have already begotten a civil war. What that will beget,

The child that is unborn will rue!

If Lord Chatham said true yesterday, the ministers are already checkmated and have not a move to make.

Pray, Madam, remember I tell you stories about the children in the wood and Lord Hardwicke, and Barry⁴, and Princess Amelie and twenty others which I have not time for now, for I have more business of one body's or other, than Lord North, and do rather more.

I will only say now that I am *becoptied*⁵ at last, enlisted in Mrs. Weesey's⁶ academy, and am to go thither to-morrow se'nnight to hear a Mr. Tig-he repeat parts of Mr. Jephson's⁷ tragedy, which I am persuaded is very good, and so good that I wish I could hear it all at once; but one might as well sit down to read Bysshe's *Art of Poetry*, as hear scraps of a plot one does not know. But I must obey; good night, Arria and Pætus without a Nero!

⁴ James Barry (1741-1806), the painter.

⁵ See letter to Lady Ossory of Jan. 24, 1775.

⁶ Mrs. Vesey.

⁷ Robert Jephson (1736-1808), Master of the Horse to the Viceroy

of Ireland. His tragedy *Braganza* was produced with success at Drury Lane in February 1775. He also wrote a tragedy founded on Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, and entitled *The Count of Narbonne*.

1601. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Jan. 22, 1775.

AFTER the magnificent overture for peace from Lord Chatham, that I announced to Madame du Deffand, you will be most impatient for my letter. *Ohimè!* you will be sadly disappointed. Instead of drawing a circle with his wand round the House of Lords, and ordering them to pacify America, on the terms he prescribed before they ventured to quit the circumference of his commands, he brought a ridiculous, uncommunicated, unconsulted motion for addressing the King immediately to withdraw the troops from Boston, as an earnest of lenient measures. The opposition stared and shrugged; the courtiers stared and laughed. His own two or three adherents left him, except Lord Camden and Lord Shelburne, and except Lord Temple, who is not his adherent, and was not there. Himself was not much animated, but very hostile; particularly on Lord Mansfield, who had taken care not to be there. He talked of three millions of Whigs in America, and told the ministers they were check-mated and had not a move left to make. Lord Camden was as strong. Lord Suffolk was thought to do better than ever, and Lord Lyttelton's declamation was commended as usual. At last, Lord Rockingham, very punily, and the Duke of Richmond joined and supported the motion; but at eight at night it was rejected by 68 to 18, though the Duke of Cumberland voted for it.

This interlude would be only entertaining, if the scene was not so totally gloomy. The Cabinet have determined on civil war, and regiments are going from Ireland and our West Indian islands. On Thursday the plan of the war is to be laid before both Houses.

LETTER 1601.—Collated with original in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

To-morrow the merchants carry their petition; which, I suppose, will be coolly received, since, if I hear true, the system is to cut off all traffic with America at present—as, you know, we can revive it when we please. There! there is food for meditation! Your reflections, as you understand the subject better than I do, will go further than mine could. Will the French you converse with be civil and keep their countenances?

George Damer t'other day proclaimed your departure for the 25th; but the Duchess of Richmond received a whole cargo of letters from ye all on Friday night, which talk of a fortnight or three weeks longer. Pray remember it is not decent to be dancing at Paris, when there is a civil war in your own country. You would be like the country squire, who passed by with his hounds as the battle of Edgehill began.

24.

I am very sorry to tell you the Duke of Gloucester is dying. About three weeks ago the physicians said it was absolutely necessary for him to go abroad immediately. He dallied, but was actually preparing. He now cannot go, and probably will not live many days, as he has had two shivering fits, and the physicians give the Duchess no hopes¹. Her affliction and courage are not to be described; they take their turns as she is in the room with him or not. His are still greater. His heart is broken, and yet his firmness and coolness amazing. I pity her beyond measure; and it is not a time to blame her having accepted an honour which so few women could have resisted, and scarce one ever has resisted.

The London and Bristol merchants carried their petitions yesterday to the House of Commons. The opposition contended for their being heard by *the* committee of the

¹ The Duke lived till 1805.

whole House, who are to consider the American papers; but the court sent them to a committee, after a debate till nine at night, with nothing very remarkable, on divisions of 197 to 81, and 1[92]² to 65. Lord Stanley spoke for the first time; his voice and manner pleased, but his matter was not so successful.

Dowdeswell³ is dead, and Tom Hervey⁴. The latter sent for his wife and acknowledged her. Don't forget to inform me when my letters must stop. Your brother has made his peace in Cavendish Square⁵. Adieu! Yours ever.

1602. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Jan. 24, 1775.

I RETURN the rebus, which I forgot to commend as it deserves, having seen it before; but I cannot tell my stories now, having much more melancholy employment. The Duke of Gloucester is dying; the physicians have no hopes, nor the poor Duchess! Though I am a bad courtier, I must be a good uncle; and even a good courtier, when I can never be rewarded for it.

The House of Commons sat till past nine last night on petitions; but the newspapers are now tolerable journals. Lord Stanley spoke for the first time and pleased by his manner: his matter, they say, would have pleased as well on any other day.

The Cophthi were an Egyptian race, of whom nobody knows anything but the learned; and thence I gave Mrs. Montagu's academies the name of Coptic, a derivation not worth repeating or explaining. Tom Hervey is dead; after

² Piece torn out.

³ William Dowdeswell, sometime Chancellor of the Exchequer.

⁴ Second son of first Earl of Bristol by his second wife. He married Anne, daughter of Francis Coghlan, Councillor-at-Law in Ireland. He

had been on bad terms with her, and had tried to set aside his marriage.

⁵ Probably with the Princess Amelia, who lived in Cavendish Square.

sending for his wife and reacknowledging her in pathetic heroics.

1603. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Jan. 25, 1775.

THE Duke of Gloucester is very ill. Had I begun my letter last night, I should have said extremely ill. It was reported and believed that he was dead; but he slept eight hours last night, and his pulse was better this morning. The physicians, who gave no hopes yesterday, say to-night that they never saw any mortal symptoms. Be assured they speak as little truth of the past as they know of what is to come. The Duke has been declining this month; and he was ordered to go abroad immediately, but delayed—and now is not able to go. I hope in God he will get strength enough—I wish him abroad for every reason. The other Duke¹, his brother, has erected his standard in opposition, and though the Duke of Gloucester is too wise, I trust, to take such a part, he would be teased to death with the politics of the Luttrels, and had better be out of the way.

The times are indeed very serious. Pacification with America is not the measure adopted. More regiments are ordered thither, and to-morrow a plan, I fear equivalent to a declaration of war, is to be laid before both Houses. They are bold ministers, methinks, who do not hesitate on a civil war, in which victory may bring ruin, and disappointment endanger their heads. Lord Chatham has already spoken out: and though his outset (a motion in the Lords last Friday) was neither wise nor successful, he will certainly be popular again with the clamorous side, which no doubt will become the popular side too, for all wars are costly, and consequently grievous. Acquisition alone can make

LETTER 1603.—¹ The Duke of Cumberland.

those burthens palatable; and in a war with our own colonies we must afflict instead of acquiring them, and cannot recover them without having undone them. I am still to learn wisdom and experience, if these things are not so.

I thank you much for the opera of the Conclave. It loses greatly of its spirit by my unacquaintance with the *dramatis personae*. By the duration of the interregnum, I suppose the Holy Ghost is strangely puzzled between the crowns and the Jesuits; and the Cardinals more afraid of poison from the latter, than of the menaces of the former. Though old folks are not less ambitious than young, they have greater aversion to arsenic. But seriously, is it not amazing that the Jesuits can still exist, when their last crime² was sufficient to have drawn down vengeance on them, if they had not been proscribed before?

We have no news of ordinary calibre; but perhaps I grow too old to learn the lesser anecdotes of the town. I scarce ever go to public places, and live only with people who have turned the corner of adventures. Indeed in this country there is something so singular and so new in most characters, that all the world hears the history of the most remarkable performers. The winter is young yet. I dare to say it will not long be barren.

27th.

The Duke of Gloucester, I hope, is out of danger; I mean for the present. It is a constitution that will always give alarms; it has radical evils, and yet amazing stamina. As to the physicians, I do not mind a syllable they say. On Saturday they were very proud of a discovery—they had now found out his distemper, and it was a new one; he had two shivering fits, and so there was matter forming. This mighty discovery, which only authenticated their former ignorance, proves to be a new blunder. On Tuesday

² Of poisoning Pope Ganganelli. *Walpole*.

they gave the Duchess no hopes at all, and on Wednesday night they recollected that his Royal Highness had had no mortal symptom—for they have no shivering fit of shame. They now talk of his going abroad in April; I wish it much sooner. In short, I am very impatient, both for his health, and other reasons. He will take the Duchess and his daughters, and go no further than the South of France. That is an answer to a question³ you have not asked. His mind will be more at peace, and he will be free from all who would disturb it for their own ends. The Luttrels are every day, I believe, writing impertinent paragraphs in the newspapers, as if in behalf of the Duke of Gloucester, which only tends to incense the King against him, that they may involve him in their own views; but he knows it, and will not be their dupe. Adieu!

P.S. I forgot to tell you that the town of Birmingham has petitioned the Parliament to enforce the American Acts, that is, make war; for they have a manufacture of swords and muskets. I believe the Dutch will petition too, for much such a reason!

1604. TO THE MARQUISE DU DEFFAND.

De Londres, ce 27 Janvier, 1775.

MON cousin s'attendra à la nouvelle de la Mort de Monseigneur le Duc de Glocestre — mais tout va bien. Le Frisson de Samedi n'annonça que la Fievre, et cette fievre est passée, et le danger aussi pour le present, à ce que je me flatte. Nos Medecins sont comme les votres, c'est à dire, des Ignorants. Il y a tout lieu de croire que le Voyage

³ Whether he will go to Italy.
Walpole.

LETTER 1604.—Not in C.; now first
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original in Walpole's handwriting
in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-
Jervis.

d'outremer aura lieu, mais on le remet au mois d'Avril, ce qui me paroît une ignorance nouvelle. Pourquoi le differer? Je vous avoue je n'en serai pas fâché sur mon propre compte. Notre Cour est bien petite, cependant mon rôle ne me flatte pas. Je n'y suis pas propre; et bien que l'interet que je prenne à la position effrayante de la Duchesse fait que je neglige rien qui puisse lui marquer mon zele, il est tres penible pour moi d'aller une ou deux fois par jour en cour. Cela ne quadre pas avec mon oisiveté, mes amusemens, mes occupations. Cela me rejette dans le monde, et c'est contraire à tout ce que j'ai toujours aimé, en un mot, à la Liberté. Je fus charmé quand mon Pere quitta le Ministere; moi je quittai le Parlement d'abord que j'en pûs saisir le Moment, et assurément c'est bien contre ma Volonté que je me trouve Courtisan à mon Age. Je n'en ai ni l'ambition, ni l'interet, ni l'envie, ni la jalousie, ni la fausseté; je cederois gaiement ma place à Quiconque en voudroit.

Je viens de recevoir une lettre de M. Conway du 19 par un jeune Seigneur Anglais. Il dit qu'ils seront de retour au tems fixe, mais j'ignore quel est ce tems fixe. Il me parle d'une grande Revolution qui va se faire dans la mode de s'habiller chez vous, et par consequent chez nous. Il dit qu'il s'agit de se mettre comme les Chevaliers du St. Esprit — Oh! pour moi je vous jure que je ne m'y mettrai point — Je ne suis point fait moi pour m'habiller comme un Danseur de Corde. A l'Armenienne¹, a la bonne heure: J'aimerai assez à m'enveloper d'un grand manteau jusqu'aux talons. Je crois qu'on a mal montré St. Cyr à mes parens. Quand j'y fus, on fit repeter des Scenes et des Dialogues de Mad. de Maintenon aux petites Demoiselles, qui les jouerent dans la perfection; et vous scavez qu'on me fit present d'une lettre originale de la Fonda-

¹ Alluding to Rousseau.

trice: J'y fûs cinque heures à ma grande contentement, quoique pas l'extreme felicité que je sentoîs avec vous à Sceaux², ou a la journée de Livry. Enfin il faut s'enthousiasmer à de certaines visions, comme je fais, san quoi Tout est fade. Aussi ces Songes arrivent ils bien rarement, et ne sont que pour les Elus. Cela m'arriva une fois apres avoir ecrit le Chateau d'Otrante. Deux ou trois ans apres J'allais à l'université de Cambridge, ou j'avois passè trois annèes de ma Jeunesse. En entrant dans un des Colleges que j'avois entierement oublîe, je me trouvois precisement dans la Cour de mon Chateau. Les Tours, les portes, la Chapelle, la grande Salle, tout y repondoit avec la plus grande exactitude. Enfin, l'Idée de ce College m'étoit restè dans la Tete sans y penser, et je m'en etois servi pour le plan de mon Chateau sans m'en apercevoir; de sorte que je croyois entrer tout de bon dans celui d'Otrante — si vous aviez etè a cotè de moi, je vous aurez frappè d'extasie, comme dans le carosse quand vous me racontates votre visite à Mad. de Coulanges³. Hah! je n'entre pas *au palais royal* avec le meme plaisir!

Couty m'a payè les Emeraudes: sont elles arrivèes en bonne santè?

La Partie Angloise de ma lettre sera bien courte aujourd'hui. On a disputè tard hier à la Chambre basse sur les remontrances des Marchands Americains — mais je n'en scais point le detail, si non que Charles Fox s'est fort dechainè contre le Seigneur North, et que le Duc d'Alva⁴ s'est distinguè pour la cour. On a voulu aussi rayer Charles premier du Martyrologe: Wilkes a dit qu'il le vouloit bien,

² Formerly the residence of the Duchesse du Maine (Anne Louise Bénédicte de Bourbon, wife of the legitimated son of Louis XIV). Sceaux was a focus of political intrigue towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. Madame du Def-

fand passed much time at Sceaux in her younger days. The life there is described in the *Mémoires* of Madame de Staal.

³ Cousin of Madame de Sévigné.

⁴ Lord George Germain.

ayant toujours observé le jour de sa mort comme fête, et non pas comme jour maigre : mais la Cour a prevalu dans l'une et l'autre contestation à une grande pluralité de voix. Ce qui est drole, c'est que la Ville de Birmingham a demandé la guerre, parce qu'on y fabrique des épées et des fusils. Je finis — il n'y a pas moyen de rencherir sur cet Avis.

1605. TO THE MARQUISE DU DEFFAND.

De Londres, ce 31 Janvier, 1775.

JE vous écris aujourd'hui, au lieu de Vendredy, pour deux raisons : la première, parce que je ne sçais si mon cousin ne sera parti avant l'arrivée de celle cy ; l'autre que je veux reprendre les Mardys pour mes jours de poste, parceque vos lettres arrivant ordinairement les Samedys, je n'y peux repondre qu'après sept jours. A l'heure qu'il est, j'ai recû Deux, l'une Samedy passé, l'autre hier au soir ; celle cy écrite conformément à votre bonté ordinaire, et à vos attentions incroyables, pour me parler de Mad. d'Olonne, dont je commence à rougir, à cause de la peine que je vous ai donnée, et de ce que j'ai mis trop d'empressement pour une bagatelle. Si le mal n'est fait, n'en parlez pas à la Grand-maman. La politesse de votre Ami M. de Presle suffira, et je vous prie de l'en remercier extremement ; aussi cet empressement fera apparemment que Mad. Mariette y mettra un prix ridicule se voyant tant pressée — mais au vrai j'ai honte de vous en tant parler.

L'Abbè Bartelemi sera surement obeï ; c'est le moins que je peux faire pour vos Amis, après tout ce que vous faites pour les miens. Ne doutez pas de leur reconnoissance. C'est la Verité meme que M. Conway, et il me parle constamment de vous en termes dont je ne puis nullement douter. Il conservera cette reconnoissance, il n'est ni

LETTER 1605.—Not in C. ; now first printed (*verbatim et literatim*) from original in Walpole's handwriting

in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis.

jeune ni changeant. Il est distrait, il est froid, il n'aura pas toute la chaleur que vous aimez dans vos Amis, mais il ne vous oubliera jamais. Il ne vous grondera pas, en vous aimant toujours également. Ma Médaille est à Strawberry Hill, ou je n'ai été depuis deux mois, à cause de ma goutte, des visites, et de la Maladie de Monseigneur le Duc; mais je compte d'y aller Dimanche prochain, et je rapporterai la médaille pour la faire dessiner. Pour les visites, j'en avois bien à faire — pour la Politique, je ne m'en soucie pas, je ne m'en mesle point. Je n'ai aucune liaison avec nos factions; j'ai des Amis de l'un et de l'autre côté, j'entends parler des deux Chambres, et j'en mande les nouvelles à mon cousin; mais je ne sais rien que l'événement passé. M. Selwyn vint chez moi l'autre jour, et nous nous plaignîmes de n'entendre parler que de l'Amérique. 'Hah! pour moi, dit il, il faut que je prenne un maître Américain pour me mettre au ton du monde.'

Son Altesse Roiale est sortie hier pour prendre l'air. Je ne crois pas ses poumons attaqués; mais il tousse beaucoup, et je presse son départ.

Je suis très content de l'étrenne de M. Conway; le mot est très joli, et ce qui est bien plus rare, exactement vrai. Pourquoi ne pas m'envoyer ses couplets? avez vous eû peur de m'humilier, de ce qu'ils valent beaucoup plus que les miens? Hah! je ne suis point envieux, ni jaloux de ma poésie; et encore plus éloigné d'être fâché si l'on me préfère mes Amis. Je vous l'ai avoué, j'ai infiniment d'orgueil, mais point de Vanité. Jamais Auteur ne s'est moins enthousiasmé pour ses ouvrages.

Je n'ai rien à mander aujourd'hui à mes parens, si vous les avez encore. Actuellement je ne suis occupé que d'une Tragedie nouvelle qu'on va donner, et à laquelle je m'intéresse beaucoup. Le Sujet est tiré de la Revolution de Portugal en faveur des Bragances. Elle est très supérieure.

ment écrite : Le Language admirablement beau, la poesie charmante — cependant, j'ai peur : L'évenement est connu, et heureux, par consequent, moins interessant. De plus, l'Auteur¹ me paroît peu fait au ressorts du Theatre, et s'entend plus aux images de la poesie qu'aux caracteres ; ce qui fait qu'il y a des longueurs, et que l'Interet n'est pas soutenu. C'est un Irlandois que j'ai autrefois connu, et qui a beaucoup d'esprit, et ce qui est plus surprenant, il est naturellement comique, et contrefait dans la perfection. On m'a persuadé de lui faire une Epilogue, dont je ne suis nullement content. Vous scavez que c'est notre usage immanquable de commencer et finir une piece par des prologues et des Epilogues. Ordinairement ces derniers morceaux sont non seulement gais, mais gaillards — usage ridicule, de faire rire ceux qu'on vient d'attrister, et que je n'ai voulu pratiquer, de sorte que mes vers ne sont que maussades ; mais comme la Satire, faute d'obscenité, nous rejouit, je me suis un peu moqué de my Lord Chesterfield, en prenant la defense du beau Sexe ; ce qui fera pardonner à la platitude de ma poesie. La piece ne sera donnée que Samedi en huit. Vous en scaurez la Reussite.

P.S. N'oubliez pas de m'avertir si je me dois habiller en danseur de corde l'année qui vient : Mr. Conway m'a annoncé qu'il s'agite chez vous de reprendre l'habillement des Chevaliers du St. Esprit : vos modes decident les notres.

1606. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Feb. 1, 1775.

WE are out of pain at present, Madam, about our Royal Highness. He has been out to take the air ; and if I had any influence, should try that in France immediately ; but

¹ Robert Jephson.

he says he should only pass the remaining part of the winter in bad inns, and thinks of not setting out till April.

I know nothing of news: Lord Chatham is at this moment preparing some in the House of Lords, which will furnish the end of the letter. Last night I was at a ball at the Lady's Club. It was all goddesses, instead of being a resurrection of dancing matrons as usual. The Duchess of Devonshire¹ effaces all without being a beauty; but her youth, figure, flowing good-nature, sense, and lively modesty, and modest familiarity, make her a phenomenon. Don't wonder I was at a ball; I have discovered that I am a year younger than I thought, yet I shall not use this year yet, but come out with it a dozen years hence.

Mr. Jephson's tragedy, which I concluded would not answer all that I had heard of it, exceeded my expectations infinitely. The language is noble,—the poetry, similes, and metaphors, enchanting. The harmony, the modulation of the lines, shows he has the best ear in the world. I remember nothing at all equal to it appearing in my time, though I am Methusalem in my memory of the stage. I don't know whether it will have all the effect there it deserves, as the story is so well known, and the happy event of it known too, which prevents *attendrissement*. Besides, the subject in reality demands but two acts, for the conspiracy and the revolution; but one can never be tired of the poetry that protracts it. Would you believe I am to appear on the theatre along with it? My Irish friends, the Bingham, have overpersuaded me to write an epilogue, which was wanting. They gave me the subject, which I have executed miserably; but at least I do not make the new Queen of Portugal lay aside her majesty, and sell *double entendres* like Lady Bridget Tolle-mache.

LETTER 1606.—¹ Georgiana Spencer, Duchess of Devonshire.

I was still more surprised to find my name in print the other day: Mr. Barry, the mad Irish painter, has written a book, and not a mad or insensible one. After talking of the great masters, he says, 'As to the Dutch school, I leave it to the deep researches of the Hon. H. W. (at length) or any other such learned gentleman, if such another can be found.' Methinks this is a little hard, Madam, seeing I have been always blamed for undervaluing the Dutch masters; but I suppose Mr. Barry has seen me laugh at some of his extravagancies in the expositions, without my knowing him. However, I shall say nothing of that, or anything more to hurt him, if ever I defend myself from Dutchism, as perhaps I may. This, I remember, was one of the stories I promised you—I forget the rest; but your Ladyship will remind me when we meet over a syllabub under the cow.

2nd.

Yesterday's mountain miscarried with more *éclat* than last time. Lord Chatham offered a bill for pacifying America by abrogating the Declaratory Law² and the late Acts; and, they say, recalled the memory of his ancient lustre. Lord Gower reminding him of something he had said in the other House the Lord knows when, received a thundering denial, as the gods call it; but men, a flat lie. Lord Temple lamented the production of so mischievous a bill, which yet he would vote to admit out of respect; but what signifies repeating the faint efforts of an old watergall opposed to its own old sun! The Duke of Grafton complained of a bill so hurried in. Lord Chatham replied, His Grace was at least as unfairly eager to hurry it out. That Duke acquainted the assembly that he differs with everybody, and has a plan of his own to offer. Lord

² The Declaratory Act of 1766 proclaimed the absolute rights of

England over the American colonies, including the right to tax.

Shelburne was violent, and Lord Mansfield so violently frightened, that he was not there; on which I hear King George joked before all his servants, when he was told it after the play. The newspapers, which now are very accurate in recounting debates, will tell your Ladyship the rest very faithfully to-morrow. When the last Prime Minister designs to open his plan I do not know; the present produces his to-day. There is a great deal of bravery and a great deal of terror stirring; and the address of to-day, I am told, has a layer of each. You must prepare, Madam, to talk America; there is no other topic to be heard, and in truth it grows a very grave one. You must lay aside your botany from the hyssop to the cedar of Libanus, and study imports and exports, and charters and geography, and religion and government, and such light reading: you will have occasion for it all. In a little time the whole country will be so much in earnest, that the dispute will probably lie in a less compass; people discuss at first, but are only angry and personal at last: and to be sure that is more amusing.

I hope this is the last letter I shall send you before you land at Hyde Park turnpike. You will have a very good neighbourhood there; Lord and Lady Apsley³ are mighty agreeable people.

1607. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 15, 1775.

You have been made easy long ago, I hope, about my gout, and have restored your good opinion to the bootikins, which reduced it to so short a fit. *They could not give you*

³ Tryphena, daughter of Thomas Scawen; m. (1759), as his second wife, Hon. Henry Bathurst (after-

wards second Earl Bathurst), created Baron Apsley in 1771.

an inflammation and swelling; they probably prevented its being worse. It is still more idle when people say they weaken—who was ever *not* weak after the gout? I, who am *naturally* weaker than anybody, recover my feet so much that I can stamp on marble with all my force, which I never saw a gouty person besides able to do. Be assured that the physicians have set about that nonsensical notion of weakening, only because the bootikins do the contrary. I complained of weakness on my breast, of which I complained thirty years before I ever felt the gout, and the apothecary shook his head, like a knave as he was, and said he had feared they would have that effect. He had never thought so, and if he had, ought to have warned me; but I believe no limb of the faculty ever laid in ambush to intercept and cut off an illness to come. If you still feel weakness, you must not wonder; the bootikins cannot make us young again. I totter as I go downstairs—but I trust I shall never totter so much as to believe in any faculty. Fools and knaves hoodwink common sense, and if it was not like insects, of which no species can be exterminated, it would not exist upon earth.

The war with our colonies, which is now declared, is a proof how much influence jargon has on human actions. A war on our own trade is *popular*! Both Houses are as eager for it as they were for conquering the Indies—which acquits them a little of rapine, when they are as glad of what will impoverish them as of what they fancied was to enrich them—so like are the great vulgar, and the small. Are not you foreigners amazed? We are raising soldiers and seamen—so are the Americans; and, unluckily, can find a troop as easily as we a trooper. But we are above descending to calculation: one would think the whole legislature were of the club at Almack's, and imagined, like Charles Fox, that our fame was to rise in proportion

to our losses. It is more extraordinary that Charles does not adopt their system, as they have copied his, but opposes them, and proposes to make his fortune when they are bankrupt. In the meantime bad news pours in from America. I do not believe all I hear—but fear I shall believe a great deal in spite of my teeth.

Another of your diplomatic brethren is become your brother in the Bath—Gordon, of Brussels. He is a fool for a comedy. We have no other news, nor think of anything that is not beyond the Atlantic. You are strangely old-fashioned to trouble your head about the Conclave; we care as much about the Caliphs of Bagdad.

I misinformed you when I said that the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester had no thoughts of Italy; they propose passing next winter at Rome, but will not stop anywhere else. I say, this is their scheme, and wish it may be executed;—but am far from having any sanguine hopes about his Royal Highness. He does not mend; his cough is very bad, and I think he falls away. He will not leave England till April, because he will inoculate his children before he carries them abroad. I tremble at the delay, and have said all I dare to the Duchess against it, as I am impatient to have him set out, and think no time should be lost.

As I was writing this I received a most obliging letter from Sir Horace the second at Nice, on the suit he is carrying on with my nephew for his most just debt, and professing all management for me. I have answered it, and insisted that he should have none for me. It would be strange indeed if I stood in the way of Gal's son and your nephew—and where justice too is at stake! Indeed, it was by my advice, when I thought Lord Orford past being hurt by it. At present, all I can do is not to let any consideration of me interfere—and I charge you, when you

see him, to convince him that the greatest mark of friendship he can show me is to do himself right—and that speedily, or nothing will be left. Surely he is better intitled to his own than the harpies that prey upon a poor half-witted man! I am now going to write a letter to his mother to ask a trifling favour, which I care not whether she grants or refuses—but it was at the request of another. Here is the letter, I beg you to give or send it, accordingly as she is at Florence or Naples.

1608. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1775.

Braganza was acted last night with prodigious success. The audience, the most impartial I ever saw, sat mute for two acts, and seemed determined to judge for themselves, and not be the dupes of the encomiums that had been so lavishly trumpeted. At the third act, they grew pleased, and interested: at the fourth they were cooled and deadened by two unnecessary scenes, but at the catastrophe in the fifth, they were transported. They clapped, shouted, huzzaed, cried bravo, and thundered out applause both at the end, and when given out again; yet the action was not worthy of the poet. Mrs. Yates shone in the dignified scenes, but had not variety enough; Smith, recalling Garrick in *Richard III*, played the Viceroy with great spirit; but Reddish¹ was pitiful and whining in the Duke; Aikin² ridiculous in the first old conspirator, and the Friar totally insignificant, though engaged in the principal scene in the play, where indeed he has too little to say. The charming beauties of the poetry were not yet discovered, and the faults in the conduct may

LETTER 1608.—¹ Samuel Reddish (1735–1785).

² James Aikin or Aickin (d. 1803).

be easily mended. In short, I trust, if this tragedy does not inspire better writers, that it will at least preserve the town from hearing with patience the stuff we have had for these fifty years. There was an excellent prologue written by Murphy. For my poor epilogue, though well delivered by Mrs. Yates, it appeared to me the flattest thing I ever heard, and the audience were very good in not groaning at it. I wish it could be spoken no more. The boxes are all taken for five-and-twenty nights, which are more than it can be acted this season.

I went to the rehearsal with all the eagerness of eighteen, and was delighted to feel myself so young again. The actors diverted me with their dissatisfactions and complaints, and though I said all I could, committed some of what they call proprieties, that were very improper, as seating the Duke and Duchess on a high throne, in the second act, which made the spectators conclude that the revolution, as I knew they would, had happened. The scenes and dresses were well imagined, and the stage handsomely crowded. All this was wanted, for, from the defect in the subject, which calls for but two acts, several scenes languished. A little more knowledge of the stage in the author may prevent this in his future plays. For his poetry, it is beautiful to the highest degree. He has another fault, which is a want of quick dialogue; there is scarce ever a short speech, so that it will please more on reading, than in representation. I will send it to you the moment it is published.

There is nothing else new, nor do I hear of anything coming. The war with America goes on briskly, that is as far as voting goes. A great majority in both Houses is as brave as a mob ducking a pickpocket. They flatter themselves they shall terrify the colonies into submission in three months, and are amazed to hear that there is no

such probability. They might as well have excommunicated them, and left it to the devil to put the sentence into execution.

Good night, and write to me. You are an idle creature, and I am very jealous of your harpsico-violin—it is your interleaved Linnæus³.

1609. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Feb. 28, 1775.

THOU recreant clerk ; I do not mean for not replying to my last missive, but for changing thy mind, thou unhallowed relapse, which I did not know when I wrote to thee last, or I would not have cockered thee up with a promise of *Braganza* ; yet to show thee that I keep faith even with heretics, thou shalt have it when thou sayest how it may be sent. Thy sin is too foul to name, but thy conscience tells thee what I mean. 'Tis an Omission worse than any of the tribe of *Com* ; and though posterity will be so selfish as to forgive it, there is not a Christian in being that ever can ; oh yes, there are some that could, though I trust they cannot. I suppose you will be glad to hear that I have got a codicil to my last gout ? I had an inflammation in my face, and yesterday was blooded for it. It sunk in two hours, but baited and gave me a sore throat ; this morning I walked lame, and cannot walk without a stick ; so the whole is gouty, for that devil can act any distemper, like a fine lady. It has hindered my going to Strawberry, whither the fine weather invited me. I wish we ever had such in summer.

The gates of Janus's temple are open and shut every

³ 'Mr. Gray often vexed me by finding him heaping notes on an interleaved Linnæus, instead of

pranking on his lyre.' See letter to Lady Ossory, Sept. 8, 1791.

other day; the porter has a sad time of it, and deserves a reversion for three lives. We are sending the Americans a sprig of olive¹, lapped up in an Act for a famine² next year; for we are as merciful as we are stout. However, as the two Houses do not much reckon upon bonfires to come, each is treating itself with one at present, and have ordered a weekly paper and a pamphlet, each called *The Crisis*, to be burnt by the common hangman; and as contradictions now go hand in hand, each party has its victim. I have seen neither of the sacrifices—both they say are very stupid; the first is too free with his Majesty; the second compliments him with the sole right of taxation. Methinks all Parliaments have a mortal aversion to the word *crisis*.

Since you left town I have made another considerable purchase, for which I have been long haggling, the rest of the Digby miniatures. They had been divided into two shares. There is one superb piece of Sir Kenelm, his wife, and two sons, by Peter Oliver, after Vandyck, in the highest preservation, and certainly the capital miniature of the world. I am not quite sure whether you did not see them two years ago; but why do I tell you anything? you are twiddling your instrument of the composite order, and care no more than Orpheus whether anybody but beasts listens to you. You now owe me two letters, and paid I will be, or I am

Your most obedient

Humble servant.

LETTER 1609.—¹ On Feb. 20 Lord North introduced a conciliatory motion to allow the colonies to tax themselves.

² An Act restraining the commerce of the New England colonies with

Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies, and prohibiting them for a limited time from fishing on the banks of Newfoundland, with certain exceptions in favour of individuals.

1610. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

March 7, 1775.

IF your contempt for your contemporaries extended to total silence, perhaps I should not disagree with you. There is dignity in indignation that refuses wholesome food to a stupid age, that is content with carrion. But why then publish Gray's Life? Keep it back till you like to publish it with the original notes. Leave the Johnsons and Macphersons to worry one another for the diversion of a rabble, that desires and deserves no better sport.

Here is *Braganza*: I do not say that either the subject or conduct are interesting. The language is good, the poetry charming. Read any tragedy written within these thirty years, and then wonder that I was delighted to see even a cousin of Melpomene.

If you have *translated Pygmalion*¹ I shall be very glad to see him too. If you have only translated the music, I shall not be much the wiser, yet do not think my ignorance makes me supercilious. I admire all your talents, though not a judge of all. Your writings, your composite instruments, your drawings are dear to me according to my degrees of capacity; and when I seize every opportunity of drawing you into a correspondence, does not it say that I love your letters, and do my utmost to cultivate your friendship? Yes, I do; let all the Prime Ministers since my father, whom you name, say as much if they can! To my great sorrow we live at a distance, and when I wish to see you most, I have seen you least; yet Strawberry, where you scarce ever was in summer, is pleasant then. If you would at any time give me a week, I should think it no trouble to

LETTER 1610.—¹ An opera by Rousseau, translated by Mason at Lord Nuneham's request.

fetch you. Time grows precious to me, and, therefore, I would employ it in the way most agreeable to me. Don't think me importunate, but it shall not be my own fault if I do not please myself.

Yours most sincerely,
H. W.

1611. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 20, 1775.

I HAVE not written to you this month, I know: no symptom of negligence, but from want of matter. You will say, perhaps, 'but there have been many long days in Parliament': very true; but long days make small sensation, when the majorities are very great, and always on the same side. The Houses go on fulminating against America; we shall see whether their edicts are regarded, or rather their troops and generals. The province of New York seems to be better disposed than the other colonies; but we must wait for the re-echo of our new Acts, and for the Congress in May. In three months we shall hear whether it will be war or peace. The nation will stare a little if it is the former. It is little expected, and less thought of. We are given up to profusion, extravagance, and pleasure: heroism is not at all in fashion. Cincinnatus will be found at the hazard-table, and Camillus at a ball. The vivacity of the young Queen of France has reached hither. Our young ladies are covered with more plumes than any nation that has no other covering. The first people of fashion are going to act plays, in which comedians, singers, dancers, figurantes, might all walk at a coronation. The summer is to open with a masquerade on the Thames. I am glad the American enthusiasts are so far off; I don't think we should be a match for them. We want more Indies; we cannot afford to lose any.

So you have chosen a Pope¹! Which will he fear most, France and Spain, or poison?

The Duke of Gloucester has lost his second daughter²; both were inoculated, that he might carry them abroad. The youngest was very unhealthy, and died the next day after the disorder appeared; the other³, on whom he dotes, will do well. He is far from being so himself; coughs, and falls away. I hope a better climate will save him.

I am wishing for summer; not to go on the water in mask, but to escape from this scene of diversions. I mix in them as little as I can; they suit neither my age or inclination. For some years I have loved the month of June, when I and all the town, for we all live together, I think, are to part.

I just now hear that Lord Bristol⁴ is dead at the Bath. He was born to the gout from his mother's family, but starved himself to keep it off. This brought on paralytic strokes, which have dispatched him. Will her Grace of Kingston now pass eldest, and condescend to be, as she really is, Countess of Bristol? or will she come over and take her trial for the becoming dignity of the exhibition in Westminster Hall? How it would sound, 'Elizabeth, Countess of Bristol, *alias* Duchess of Kingston, come into court!' I can tell you nothing more extraordinary, nor would any history figure near hers. It shows genius to strike out anything so new as her achievements. Though we have many uncommon personages, it is not easy for them to be superiorly particular. Adieu!

LETTER 1611.—¹ Giovanni Angelo Braschi, Pope under the name of Pius VI.

² Princess Caroline Augusta Maria.

³ Princess Sophia Matilda.

⁴ George William Hervey, second Earl of Bristol. *Walpole*.

1612. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, April 3, 1775.

WELL! your book¹ is walking the town in midday. How it is liked I do not yet know. Were I to judge from my own feelings, I should say there never was so entertaining or interesting a work: that it is the most perfect model of biography; and must make Tacitus, and Agricola too, detest you. But as the world and simple I are not often of the same opinion, it will perhaps be thought very dull. If it is, all we can do is to appeal to that undutiful urchin, Posterity, who commonly treats the judgement of its parents with contempt, though it has so profound a veneration for its most distant ancestors. As you have neither imitated the teeth-breaking diction of Johnson, nor coined slanders against the most virtuous names in story, like modern historians, you cannot expect to please the *reigning* taste. Few persons have had time, from their politics, diversions, and gaming, to have read much of so large a volume, which they will keep for the summer, when they have full as much of nothing to do. Such as love poetry, or think themselves poets, will have hurried to the verses and been disappointed at not finding half a dozen more Elegies in a Churchyard. A few fine gentlemen will have read one or two of the shortest letters, which not being exactly such as they write themselves, they will dislike or copy next post; they who wish or intend to find fault with Gray, you, or even me, have, to be sure, skimmed over the whole, except the Latin, for even spite, *non est tanti*——. The reviewers, no doubt, are already writing against you; not because they have read the whole, but because one's own name is always the first thing that strikes one in a book. The

Scotch will be more deliberate, but not less angry; and if not less angry, not more merciful. Every Hume, however spelt, will I don't know what do; I should be sorry to be able to guess what. I have already been asked why I did not prevent publication of the censure on David²? The truth is (as you know) I never saw the whole together till now, and not that part; and if I had, why ought I to have prevented it? Voltaire³ will cast an *imbelle javelin sine ictu* at Gray, for he loves to depreciate a *dead* great author, even when unprovoked,—even when he has commended him alive, or before he was so vain and so envious as he is now. The Rousseaurians will imagine that I interpolated the condemnation of his *Eloïse*⁴. In short, we shall have many sins laid to our charge, of which we are innocent; but what can the malicious say against the innocent but what is not true?

I am here in brunt to the storm; you sit serenely aloof and smile at its sputtering. So should I too, were I out of sight, but I hate to be stared at, and the object of whispers before my face. The Maccaronis will laugh out, for you say I am still in the fashionable world.—‘What!’ they will cry, as they read while their hair is curling,—‘that old soul’; for old and old-fashioned are synonymous in the vocabulary of mode, alas! Nobody is so sorry as I to be in the world’s fashionable purlieus; still, in truth, all this is a joke and touches me little. I seem to myself a Strulbrug, who have lived past my time, and see almost my own life written before my face while I am yet upon earth, and as it were the only one of my contemporaries with whom I began the world. Well; in a month’s time there will be little question of Gray, and less of me.

² See Gray’s letter to James Beattie of July 2, 1770.

³ See *Works of Gray*, ed. Gosse,

vol. iii. p. 378, note.

⁴ See Gray’s letter to Mason of Jan. 22, 1761.

America and feathers and masquerades will drive us into libraries, and there I am well content to live as an humble companion to Gray and you; and, thank my stars, not on the same shelf with the Macphersons and Dalrymples.

One omission I have found, at which I wonder; you do not mention Gray's study of physic, of which he had read much, and I doubt to his hurt. I had not seen till now that delightful encomium on Cambridge⁵, when empty of its inhabitants. It is as good as anything in the book, and has that true humour, which I think equal to any of his excellencies. So has the apostrophe to Nicholls⁶, 'Why, you monster, I shall never be dirty and amused as long as I live,' but I will not quote any more, though I shall be reading it and reading it for the rest of my life.

But come, here is a task you must perform, and forthwith, and if you will not write to me, you shall *transcribe* to me, or I will *combustle* you. Send me incontinently all the proper names that are omitted. You know how I love writing marginal notes in my books, and there is not a word in or out of the book of which I will be ignorant. To save you trouble, here is a list of who is's. Page 152, fill up the asterisks; do. p. 174, do. 206, do. 232, 249, Peer who is it; 250? do.; the Lady of Quality? 251; the leader, 275; who the asterisk, 282? the Dr. who, 283? do. 284; the B.'s and E.'s 288, where, whose is Stratton? 290, Lord?

You see my queries are not very numerous. If you do not answer them I will not tell you a syllable of what the *fashionable* say of your book, and I do not believe you have another correspondent amongst them. At present they are labouring through a very short work, more peculiarly addressed to them, at least to a respectable part of them,

⁵ In Gray's letter to West written in Dec. 1786.

⁶ Rev. Norton Nicholls; see Gray's letter to him of June 24, 1769.

the Jockey Club, who, to the latter's extreme surprise, have been consulted on a point of honour by Mr. Fitzgerald, which, however, he has already decided himself with as little conscience as they could do in their most punctilious moments.

If you will satisfy me, I will tell you the following *bon-mot* of Foote, but be sure you don't read what follows till you have obeyed my commands. Foote was at Paris in October, when *Dr. Murray*⁷ was, who *admiring* or *dreading* his wit (for commentators dispute on the true reading) often invited him to dinner with his nephew⁸. The Ambassador produced a very small bottle of Tokay, and dispensed it in very small glasses. The uncle, to prove how precious every drop, said it was of the most exquisite growth, and very old. Foote, taking up the diminutive glass, and examining it, replied, 'It is very little of its age.' Return me my story if you don't perform the conditions. I wish I could send you anybody's else life to write!

1613. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, April 11, 1775.

I THANK you, dear Sir, for your kind letter and the good account you give of yourself—nor can I blame your change from writing—that is, transcribing to reading—sure you ought to divert yourself rather than others—though I should not say so, if your pen had not confined itself to transcripts.

I am perfectly well, and heed not the weather; though I wish the seasons came a little oftener into their own places instead of each other's. From November till a fort-

⁷ The pseudonym adopted by Lord Mansfield during his visit to France in the preceding autumn.

⁸ Lord Stormont, Ambassador at Paris.

night ago, we had warmth that I should often be glad of in summer—and since we are not sure of it then, was rejoiced when I could get it. For myself, I am a kind of delicate Hercules: and though made of paper, have, by temperance, by using as much cold water inwardly and outwardly as I can, and by taking no precautions against catching cold, and braving all weathers, become capable of suffering by none. My biennial visitant, the gout, has yielded to the bootikins, and stayed with me this last time but five weeks in lieu of five months. Stronger men perhaps would kill themselves by my practice, but it has done so long with me, I shall trust to it.

I intended writing to you on Gray's Life, if you had not prevented me. I am charmed with it, and prefer it to all the biography I ever saw. The style is excellent, simple, unaffected: the method admirable, artful, and judicious. He has *framed* the fragments (as a person said) so well, that they are fine drawings, if not finished pictures. For my part, I am so interested in it, that I shall certainly read it over and over. I do not find that is likely to be the case with many *yet*. Never was a book, which people pretended to expect so much with impatience, less devoured—at least in London, where quartos are not of quick digestion. Faults are found, I hear, at Eton with the Latin poems for false quantities—no matter—they are equal to the English—and can one say more?

At Cambridge, I should think, the book would both offend much, and please—at least if they are as sensible to humour as to ill-humour. And there is orthodoxy enough to wash down a camel. The Scotch and the reviewers will be still more angry, and the latter have not a syllable to pacify them—so they who wait for their decisions will probably miss of reading the most entertaining book in the world—a punishment which they who trust to such wretched

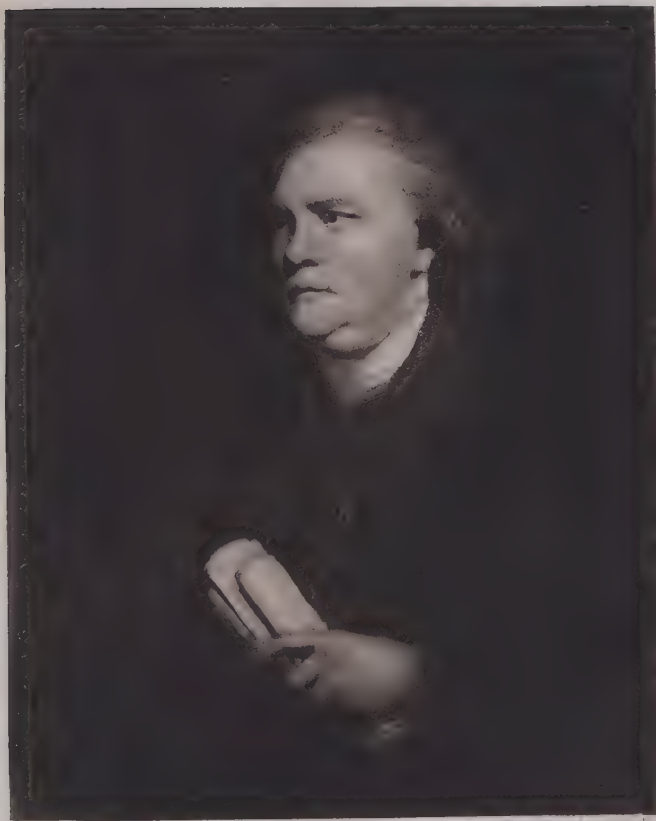
judges deserve, for who are more contemptible than such judges, but they who pin their faith on them?

In answer to you, yourself, my good Sir, I shall not subscribe to your censure of Mr. Mason, whom I love and admire, and who has shown the greatest taste possible in the execution of this work. Surely he has *said* enough in gratitude, and *done* far beyond what gratitude could demand. It seems delicacy in expatiating on the legacy: particularizing more gratitude would have lessened the evidence of friendship, and made the justice done to Gray's character look more like a debt. He speaks of him in slender circumstances, not as distressed—and so he was, till after the deaths of his parents and aunts, and even then, surely not rich. I think he does somewhere say that he meant to be buried with his mother, and not specifying any other place confirms it. In short, Mr. Mason shall never know your criticisms; he has a good heart, and would feel them, though certainly not apprised that he could merit them. A man who has so called out all his friend's virtues could not want them himself.

I shall be much obliged to you for the prints you destine for me. The Earl of Cumberland I have, and will not rob you of. I wish you had been as successful with Mr. G. as with Mr. T.¹ I mean, if you are not yet paid—now is the time, for he has sold his house to the Duke of Marlborough—I suppose he will not keep his prints long: he changes his pursuits continually and extravagantly—and then sells to indulge new fancies.

I have had a piece of luck within these two days. I have long lamented our having no certain piece written by Anne Boleyn's brother, Lord Rochford. I have found a very pretty copy of verses by him in the new published second

LETTER 1613.—¹ Perhaps Mr. Gulston and Mr. Tyson.



Rev. William Mason
from a painting by Sir J. Reynolds, P.R.A.

volume of the *Nugae Antiquae*², though by mistake he is called Earl of, instead of Viscount, Rochford. They are taken from a MS. dated twenty-eight years after the author's death, and are much in the manner of Lord Surry's and Sir Tho. Wyat's poems. I should at first have doubted if they were not counterfeited, on reading my *Noble Authors*; but then the blunder of *Earl* for *Viscount* would hardly have been committed. A little modernized, and softened in the cadence, they would be very pretty.

I have got the rest of the Digby pictures, but at a very high rate. There is one very large of Sir Kenelm, his wife, and two sons, in exquisite preservation, though the heads of him and his wife not so highly finished as those I have—yet the boys and draperies are so amazing, that, together with the size, it is certainly the most capital miniature in the world.—There are a few more, very fine too. I shall be happy to show them to you, whenever you Burnhamize—I mean before August, when I propose making my dear old blind friend a visit at Paris—nothing else would carry me thither. I am too old to seek diversions, and too indolent to remove to a distance by choice, though not so immovable as you to much less distance. Adieu! pray tell me what you hear is said of Gray's Life at Cambridge.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1614. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, April 14, 1775.

WHAT is the perfection of ingratitude? silence. What is the perfection of gratitude? silence. Obedience is better than sacrifice, but obedience may be sacrifice too: judge.

² Compiled from family papers relating to the Haringtons by Rev. Henry Harington (1755–1791).

We are both a little disappointed, are not we? How could we imagine that a quarto, that contained nothing but wit, humour, sentiment, truth, morality, reflection, genuine and original poetry, and the memoirs of two poets, of which one was a youth without guile or gall, and the other a good man through life, should interest the present age; especially when such ingredients were arranged with exquisite taste and judgement, and compose the most pleasing work, the standard of biography? No, my good friend, unless folks spare their praises because it would charm me to hear them, I have been forced to ask what is thought of Gray's Life. Indeed nobody, without my avidity, could read it at once, and as it has been published a fortnight, it was impossible it could keep its station amidst the torrent of unlively follies that overflow each day. Well, the best books were certainly never calculated for the plurality of readers; or, which is wondrous rare, some very good judge must be the dictator of the age. Still it is a comfort that works of genius are indestructible. They can neither be overlaid by the dullness of cotemporaries, nor escape the penetration of subsequent taste in all centuries, who, like the adepts in chemistry, transmit the secret to the brotherhood, and preserve the nostrum of the elixir for those who are worthy of it.

For me, though I recur once or twice a day to *the volume*, I have had time to read other things too, as a journey to Spain and Portugal, by a Mr. Twiss¹, who tells one nothing in vulgar aims at wit but what Baretti and others have told, that those kingdoms contain nothing but muleteers and bad inns, and are as dull and depopulated as countries must be, where the Inquisition has reigned so long, and despotism reigns still. I have waded through Mr. Tyrr-

LETTER 1614.—¹ Richard Twiss (1747-1821).

whit's² most tedious notes to the *Canterbury Tales*, for a true antiquary can still be zealous to settle the genuine shape of a lump of mineral from which Dryden extracted all the gold, and converted into beautiful medals. I was paid for my trouble by lighting on this couplet, so applicable to her Grace of Kingston,—

I graunt it well, I have of non envie,
Who maidenhed preferre to bigamie.

I have dipped into the second volume of *Nugae Antiquae*, and was lucky there too, finding a madrigal, not at all despicable, by the Viscount Rochford (Anne Boleyn's brother), of whom I had never been able to discover a single distich. For Macpherson, I stopped dead short in the first volume; never was such a heap of insignificant trash and lies. One instance shall suffice: in a letter from a spy to James II there is a blank for a name: a note without the smallest ground to build the conjecture on, says, 'probably the Earl of Devonshire³,' pretty well! yet not content, the honest gentleman says in the index, 'The Earl of Devonshire is suspected of favouring the excluded family.' Can you suspect such a worthy person of forgery? could he forge *Ossian*?

I forgot, in excuse for the town, to tell you that it is very busy about a history of two Perreau's⁴ and a Mrs. Rudd, who are likely to be hanged for misapplying their ingenuity. They drew bills, instead of rising from the pillory to pensions by coining anecdotes against the author and friends of the Revolution. As Mrs. Rudd has turned evidence, I suppose as soon as her husband is executed,

² Thomas Tyrwhitt (1730–1786), who first exposed the 'Rowley' forgeries in print.

³ William Cavendish (1641–1707), fourth Earl and first Duke of Devon-

shire.

⁴ Daniel and Robert Perreau were found guilty, and hanged in Jan. 1776; Mrs. Rudd was acquitted.

she will have eight hundred a year to educate her children.

To return to Ossian: is not it evident that the Scots are of Irish parentage? Hurt at the charge of having never produced a *poet*, they forge an epic in *prose*.

Thank you for answering my queries. I have one more: who was the person Gray suspected of writing Colman's and Lloyd's satire⁵? I imagine, the person mentioned in the next page. Mr. Chute says, Posterity will not believe that such a book as yours could be written in this age, which has so totally lost sight of taste and common sense. Pray, did you write it now, or when *somehow or other* (as woman and the French say) you lived in the Augustan age?

Since I wrote this, I have gone further into the *Nugae Antiquae*, and have found three invaluable letters with admirable pictures of the courts of that time. They show clearly what a sad dog Queen Bess was, and K. James what a silly bitch. There is a *bon mot* to the latter of Sir John Harrington's (translator of Ariosto), who had a great deal of wit. The son of David 'did much presse for my opinion touchinge the power of Satane in matter of witchcraft, and askede me with much gravitie if I did truelie understande why the devil did worke more with anciente women than others. I did not refraine from a scurvey jeste, and even saide (notwithstandinge to whom it was saide) that we were taughte hereof in scripture, where it is tolde that the devil walketh in dry places.' Was it possible to make a better answer to such a foolish question? Is not this worthy of being hung up as a companion to Foote's? bad as the ages we wot of, they furnish *bons mots* at least.

Lord Nuneham has just been here, and says everybody

⁵ Gray at first suspected Richard Pottinger, Under Secretary of State,

1754-60. See his letter to Mason of June 7, 1760.

he has heard speak of it likes your book; that does not content me; they must say as Mr. Chute and I do, that we will read it for the rest of our lives. Adieu.

Your constant reader,

H. W.

P.S. I forgot to put my letter in the post on Saturday.

1615. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, April 17, 1775.

It is more equitable to suppose that my conception is worn out, than that the world wants events. I tell you of a nation of madmen, and yet want instances. It is certain, both that we do not grow sage, and that I have nothing to say. The town is divided into two great classes, the politicians and the pleurists. The first are occupied with that vast foetus, the American contest; and wars at that distance do not go on expeditiously. Wilkes has arrived at his *ne plus ultra*; he has presented a remonstrance¹ in form to the Throne; and, with the magnanimity of an Alexander, used his triumph with moderation—in modern language, with good breeding. The younger generation game, dress, dance, go to Newmarket. Some of them, not juniors all, learn to sing. Cortez was victorious in our last opera, *Montezuma*. I doubt the Americans will not be vanquished in recitative.

The cause of M. de Guisnes² is still going on. The

LETTER 1615.—¹ On April 10, 1775, Wilkes, as Lord Mayor, presented to the King a remonstrance from the Livery of London against the American Bills. George III owned that he had never seen so well-bred a Lord Mayor.

² A lawsuit between the Comte de

Guines and his former secretary. The latter, M. Tort, accused the Comte of gambling in the funds. M. de Guines on his side accused Tort of abstracting money and papers, of smuggling, and of communicating dispatches to outsiders. Tort was ordered to apologize and

publications would fill a whole shelf. The Duc d'Aiguillon has, in self-defence, sent forth their correspondence. I have not read it yet; he will find it difficult to appear white in my eyes.

Lady Gertrude Hotham³ (Lord Chesterfield's sister), one of the few whom perhaps you remember, is dead; she set her ruffle, and thence the rest of her dress, on fire, and died of it in ten days. She had wit like all her brothers, but for many years had been a Methodist. About two years ago, as the Earl was ill, she went with her Primate, Lady Huntingdon⁴, to try to tempt him to one of their seminaries in Wales, hoping to get at his soul by a cranny in his health. They extolled the prospects, and then there were such charming mountains! 'Hold, ladies,' said he; 'I don't love mountains,—when your Ladyship's faith has removed the mountains, I will go thither with all my heart!' What pity there is nothing of that wit in his letters!

Is it possible this is all I should have to tell you after a month's silence? 'Tis well I have made it a rule to be punctual; how natural to wait till something should happen, if I were not a prodigy of regularity! I am here alone, courting a coy spring, who sends me a cross answer by an east wind, and am forced to content myself with the old housekeeper, a fire. I have books, and prints, and playthings, and the time passes agreeably, but will not do to relate. Your letters will be particularly acceptable, when you have got your nephew—not that nephews are charming things, but I am sure you will like yours, though you must allow for a vast difference in your ideas. You have been forty years out of England, and can have but a very faint image of what it is now. You have seen nothing but raw

pay a fine, but neither of the parties was satisfied by the verdict, and both appealed.

³ Widow of Sir Charles Hotham,

Baronet, of Scarborough.

⁴ Lady Selina Shirley, Countess Dowager of Huntingdon. *Walpole*.

boys and rawer governors. Your nephew has just lived long enough to be formed on the present scale ; at Florence one may subsist for a century on the same way of thinking. He has drops of your and his father's blood, that is, gentle, humane feelings. Talk to his heart, not to his language. In short, think that anything you see, and do not approve, is the growth of the age, and not peculiar to him. When you discover his father, be sure it is his own. Believe me, I found him so preferable to his contemporaries, that I loved him.

The Countess has not deigned to send me an answer—perhaps will say she has—or perhaps thinks there is a plot against her, and has written to her lawyers for advice. Take no notice ; I was totally indifferent whether she complied with my request or not, but could not refuse to make it. She must have a marvellous quantity of cunning if she suspects me of it, who have done nothing but what my duty compelled me to do against my inclination. Were her son to relapse, she would see whether I was so fond of power ! After passing my life in shunning power and self-interest, I am scarce trying to trick an old woman out of a living for a man I never saw !—Do not jog her, I am content with the reasonable excuse she gives me of writing to her no more. Adieu !

Arlington Street, April 22 ⁵.

This letter would have set out yesterday if I had come to town, as I intended : now it cannot depart till Tuesday ; and for anything it contains, will arrive time enough. Yours of the 8th met me here, and seems to complain of my long silence. The beginning of my letter shows I was conscious it was time to write—and yet I am not aware that I have ever exceeded the interval of a month, and

⁵ Printed by Cunningham as a separate letter.

am never so long without writing, if anything material happens. This whole winter has been passed in condemning the Americans and preparing punishments for them, and possibly for ourselves too. Nothing looks as if they would submit—but mere reasonings and speculations I never send you. You are mistaken if you think our populace disturb the ministry in their proceedings. The mob have not yet entered into the quarrel. The Americans are far from being popular here. If they are not subdued, or their refractoriness is attended with any national calamity, I should think the consequences would be very serious indeed!—but I never guess or conjecture—especially in so wide a field.

I dined to-day at the Exhibition of Pictures, with the Royal Academicians. We do not beat Titian or Guido yet. Zoffani has sent over a wretched Holy Family. What is he doing? Does he return, or go to Russia, as they say? He is the Hogarth of Dutch painting, but, no more than Hogarth, can shine out of his own way. He might have drawn the Holy Family well if he had seen them *in statu quo*. Sir Joshua Reynolds is a great painter, but, unfortunately, his colours seldom stand longer than crayons. We have a Swede, one Louthembourg, who would paint landscape and cattle excellently if he did not in every picture indulge some one colour inordinately. Horse, dogs, and animals we paint admirably, and a few landscapes well. The prices of all are outrageous, and the numbers of professors still greater. We have an American, West, who deals in high history, and is vastly admired, but he is heavier than Guercino, and has still less grace, and is very inferior. We have almost a statuary or two, and very good architects; but as Vanbrugh dealt in quarries, and Kent in lumber, Adam, our most admired, is all gingerbread, filigraine, and fan-painting. Wyatt, less fashionable, has as much taste, is grander, and

more pure. We have private houses that cost more than the Palace Pitti⁶. Will you never come and see your fine country before it is undone?

1616. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, April 25, 1775.

THE least I can do, dear Sir, in gratitude for the cargo of prints I have received to-day from you, is to send you a medicine. A pair of bootikins will set out to-morrow morning in the machine that goes from the Queen's Head in Gray's Inn Lane. To be certain, you had better send for them where the machine inns, lest they should neglect delivering them at Milton. My not losing a moment shows my zeal—but if you can bear a little pain, I should not press you to use them. I have suffered so dreadfully, that I constantly wear them to diminish the stock of gout in my constitution; but as your fit is very slight, and will not last, and as you are pretty sure by its beginning so late that you will never have much; and as the gout certainly carries off other complaints, had not you better endure a little, when it is rather a remedy than a disease? I do not desire to be entirely delivered from the gout, for all reformatations do but make room for some new grievance; and, in my opinion, a disorder that requires no physician is preferable to any that does. However, I have put relief in your power, and you will judge for yourself. You must tie them as tight as you can bear, the flannel next to the flesh; and when you take them off, it should be in bed. Rub your feet with a warm cloth, and put on warm stockings, for fear of catching cold while the pores are open. It would kill anybody but me, who am of adamant, to walk out into the dew in winter in my slippers in half an hour after pulling off the bootikins.

⁶ Palace of the Great Dukes at Florence. *Walpole*.

A physician sent me word, good-naturedly, that there was danger of catching cold after the bootikins, unless one was careful. I thanked him, but told him my precaution was, never taking any. All the winter I pass five days in a week without walking out, and sit often by the fireside till seven in the evening. When I do go out, whatever the weather is, I go with both glasses of the coach down, and so I do at midnight out of the hottest room. I have not had a single cold, however slight, these two years.

You are too candid in submitting at once to my defence of Mr. Mason. It is true I am more charmed with his book than I almost ever was with one. I find more people like the grave letters than those of humour, and some think the latter a little affected, which is as wrong a judgement as they could make; for Gray never wrote anything easily but things of humour. Humour was his natural and original turn—and though, from his childhood, he was grave and reserved, his genius led him to see things ludicrously and satirically; and though his health and dissatisfaction gave him low spirits, his melancholy turn was much more affected than his pleasantry in writing. You knew him enough to know I am in the right—but the world in general always wants to be told how to think, as well as what to think. The print¹, I agree with you, though like, is a very disagreeable likeness, and the worst likeness of him. It gives the primness he had when under constraint; and there is a blackness in the countenance which was like him only the last time I ever saw him, when I was much struck with it; and, though I did not apprehend him in danger, it left an impression on me that was uneasy, and almost prophetic of what I heard but too soon after leaving him. Wilson drew the picture under much such impression, and

LETTER 1616.—¹ The print prefixed to the 4to edition of the *Memoirs of Gray*.

I could not bear it in my room; Mr. Mason altered it a little, but still it is not well, nor gives any idea of the determined virtues of his heart. It just serves to help the reader to an image of the person whose genius and integrity they must admire, if they are so happy as to have a taste for either.

The peep into the gardens at Twickenham is a silly little book, of which a few little copies were printed some years ago for presents, and which now sets up for itself as a vendible book. It is a most inaccurate, superficial, blundering account of Twickenham and other places, drawn up by a Jewess², who has married twice, and turned Christian, poetress, and authoress. She has printed her poems, too, and one complimentary copy of mine, which in good breeding I could not help sending her in return for violent compliments in verse to me. I do not remember that hers were good; mine I know were very bad, and certainly never intended for the press.

I bought the first volume of Manchester³, but could not read it; it was much too learned for me; and seemed rather an account of Babel than Manchester, I mean in point of antiquity. To be sure, it is very kind in an author to promise one the history of a country town, and give one a circumstantial account of the antediluvian world into the bargain. But I am simple and ignorant, and desire no more than I pay for. And then for my progenitors, Noah and the Saxons, I have no curiosity about them. Bishop Lyttelton used to plague me to death with barrows, and tumuli, and Roman camps, and all those bumps in the ground that do not amount to a most imperfect ichnography; but, in good truth, I am content with all arts when perfected, nor inquire

² Apparently a Mrs. Penny. (See Nichols's *Illustrations of Literature*, vol. vii. pp. 541-2.)

³ *The History of Manchester*, by John Whitaker (1735-1808).

how ingeniously people contrived to do without them—and I care still less for remains of art that retain no vestiges of art. Mr. Bryant, who is sublime in unknown knowledge, diverted me more, yet I have not finished his work, no more than he has. There is a great ingenuity in discovering all history (though it has never been written) by etymologies. Nay, he convinced me that the Greeks had totally mistaken all they went to learn in Egypt, &c., by doing, as the French do still, judge wrong by the ear—but as I have been trying now and then for above forty years to learn something, I have not time to unlearn it all again, though I allow this is our best sort of knowledge. If I should die when I am not clear in the History of the World below its first three thousand years, I should be at a sad loss on meeting with Homer and Hesiod, or any of those *moderns* in the Elysian fields, before I knew what I ought to think of them.

Pray do not betray my ignorance: the reviewers and such *litterati* have called me *a learned and ingenious gentleman*. I am sorry they ever heard my name, but don't let them know how irreverently I speak of the erudite, whom I dare to say they admire. These wasps, I suppose, will be very angry at the just contempt Mr. Gray had for them, and will, as insects do, attempt to sting, in hopes that their twelve-penny readers will suck a little venom from the momentary tumour they raise—but good night—and once more, thank you for the prints.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1617. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 7, 1775.

METHINKS I am grown an uninteresting correspondent. Yet I know not how to help it. I never could *compose* letters; they were forced to write themselves, and lived

upon their daily bread. I have not only done with politics, but politics have done with themselves. They depend on opposition, as a private dispute does—and there is scarce any such thing—I mean in these islands. There is, indeed, beyond the seas an opposition, so big, that most folks call it a rebellion, which if computed by the tract of country it occupies, we, as so diminutive in comparison, ought rather to be called in rebellion to that. All the late letters thence are as hostile as possible; and, unless their heads are as cool as their hearts seem determined, it will not be long before we hear of the overt acts of war. Our three Generals¹ are sailed, and Gage will have a pretty large army. They say he is preparing to attack the American magazine. Our stake is deep, though, like other rebellions, this does not aim at the capital; yet it is that kind of war in which even victory may ruin us. Some of your *corps diplomatique* menace us with the great armaments preparing in Spain, but the stocks, that are no heroes, do not seem to believe them; and I am too brave to be frightened before they are. I live a good deal here, and the Spaniards must be at Brentford before I shall make the militia of Twickenham turn out. The map of America I have forgotten, and cannot learn it again now, but leave it to a younger generation, whose business it will be.

I have outlived very nearly all the persons that were on the stage when I came into the world. My cotemporaries seem going too. I have lost three of them very lately, Lady Milton², General Boscawen³, and the Duchess of Montagu⁴—I don't believe the latter's death has put the same thoughts into her widower's head as it has into mine: he will think of

LETTER 1617.—¹ Generals Burgoyne, Clinton, and Howe.

² Lady Caroline Sackville, daughter of Lionel, Duke of Dorset, and wife of Joseph Damer, Lord Milton. *Walpole*.

³ Third son of Hugh, first Viscount Falmouth. *Walpole*.

⁴ Mary, second daughter of John, second Duke of Montagu. *Walpole*.

leaving a young Duke⁵, before he packs up. The Duchess has given 7,000*l.* a year to her daughter the Duchess of Buccleuch, and as much to the Duke of Montagu, yet only for his life, so perhaps she was not very desirous of his having a son and heir. Another of our number is dying, the Duchess of Northumberland. Her turtle will not be so impatient for a mate, as his patent⁶ does not enable him to beget Percys—a Master or Miss Smithson would sound like natural children.

The papers, my only informers, say your new Pope has opened the cage of the Jesuits, and let them fly. So has the King of France done for Madame du Barri. I suppose both will return to their former professions,—different kinds of intrigues. His Holiness, I suppose, was afraid of following his predecessor too soon.

Have not you got your nephew yet? Pray, when he leaves you, give him a packet of my letters; it is long since I had one, and I take for granted that he will return by next session.

The present session, say my oracles, is to end this month. So is the cause of Monsieur de Guisnes—it is time; the controversy amounts to many volumes, and exhausted my patience; I could not go through it. His adversary⁷, I am

⁵ The Duke's only son, Lord Montagu of Boughton, died in 1766. The Duke did not marry again.

⁶ George Brudenel, Earl of Cardigan, husband of Lady Mary Montagu, one of the co-heiresses of Duke John; and Sir Hugh Smithson, Earl of Northumberland, husband of Lady Elizabeth Seymour, sole heiress of Algernon, Duke of Somerset, were to be created Dukes at the same time, but as it was from the pretensions of their wives, George III. rightly would not entail the Dukedoms on their children by other wives. The Earl of Cardigan would not accept it on that condition; the Earl of North-

umberland did, and was made a Duke. Soon after Lord Cardigan got the Dukedom without that limitation, and only lost the precedence he would have had over Lord Cardigan, who was a senior Earl. *Walpole*.—The last sentence of this note is unintelligible as it stands. Horace Walpole no doubt meant that had the Earl of Cardigan accepted the Dukedom when it was first offered to him, he would have retained his precedence over the Duke of Northumberland, to whom as an Earl he was senior.

⁷ M. Tort.

told by those who have more phlegm, has lost all temper and discretion, abuses even his protectors, and the public, for being against him. This looks well for De Guisnes; if anything can pay him for what he has undergone! What courage any man must have that supports a controversy! It is treating your enemies with everything that can be said to your prejudice. How can one hate one enemy more than all?

As Strawberry furnishes so little, and this letter is not impatient to set out, I shall carry it to town, and keep it for more bulk. Yet I must commend myself a little first. I have finished this house and place these three years, and yet am content with and enjoy it—a very uncommon case in a country where nobody is pleased but while they are improving, and where they are tired the moment they have done. I choose my house should enjoy itself, which poor houses and gardens seldom do, for people go on mending till they die, and the next comer, who likes to improve too, begins to mend all that has been done. I knew what I wished; I have it, and am satisfied—and yet do not forget that I am one of my cotemporaries! I have all my life been blessed with knowing my own mind. I never wished to be *anybody*, that is, anything; and when the moments have arrived in which I might have been what I pleased, I resisted them, and persisted in my nothinghood. I hated Parliament, resolved to quit it, and did: was told I should repent, but never have. There ends my panegyric on myself; and pray don't think it very high-flown, when the sum of all is, that I am content with a small house and garden, and with being nobody.

Tuesday, 9th. Mr. Croft tells me your brother is in affliction for the loss of his eldest daughter, who was married to Rivington the printer. I did not know he had

an eldest daughter—oh, but yea—and more—all Fitzes⁸—but not by the same mother. You and I have no business to know of more than are in the Court Calendar. This is all town has added to my stock. Adieu !

1618. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, May 7, 1775.

OF all the birds in the air, I like a Freemason best, and next a physician that gives one pills to purge melancholy. I am content to be sick, when my medicines are palatable. I remember the first words of a letter I wrote to you into Suffolk, and if you do too, repeat them if possible with exaggeration.

You are the idlest of beings, and never set pen to paper, or I am an indefatigable correspondent, and plague you with my letters. I cannot help it. Not that I have anything to say, or any reason for not waiting to hear from you. The reviews do not know yet what to say to your book, and so have not mentioned it; probably they are afraid of stumbling over the Æolian harp again, and are weighing every word they write in a pair of lexicon-scales. Lord Nuneham, who maintained to me at first that everybody was charmed with your work, does own now that some folks begin to carp at it, had cause to dislike it, have had time to whisper their prejudices, no matter. Its merit does not depend on the competence of the present age: you have fixed the method of biography, and whoever will write a life well must imitate you.

You have done another service that you are not aware of. I, who, simpleton as I was, loved to be an author, am so ashamed of my own stuff, and so convinced that nobody but you and Gray could write, have taken shame to myself,

⁸ All natural children. *Walpole.*

and forsworn the press ; yet as I cannot be idle, it is impossible, I have invented a new and very harmless way of *making books*, which diverts me as well, and brings me to no disgrace. I have just made a *new book*, which costs me only money, which I don't value, and time, which I love to employ. It is a volume of etchings by *noble authors*. They are bound in robes of crimson and gold : the titles are printed at my own press, and the pasting is *by my own hand*. What I shall *compose* next I do not know. As you too seem to have given over writing, I wish you would draw for me, or etch ; but with your variety of talents, perhaps you are making another match between two musical instruments. Is Mynheer Drum contracted with Signora Flageolet ? or are you contriving how to make one mouth blow a trumpet, and sing at the same time ? Mr. Bentley was always inventing new dishes by compounding heterogeneous ingredients, and called it cultivating the *Materia Edica* ; for you geniuses hate the beaten road. He never would draw with common colours, or Indian ink, but being purely indolent too, always dipped his brush in the first thing he met, no matter whether the ashes, or the oil and vinegar, or all together, and ten to one but he tasted too, whether they would not make a good sauce, for cleanliness was not one of his delicacies.

I have been at all the exhibitions, and do not find that we are got an inch nearer Raphael than we were. Sir Joshua has indeed produced the best portrait he ever painted, that of the Primate of Ireland¹, whom age has softened into a beauty : all the painters are begging to draw him, as they did from Reynolds's beggar-man. My brother has given me the view of Gray's tomb and churchyard, very prettily done, and inspired by Gray's own melancholy. I have hung it here in my favourite blue room, as a com-

LETTER 1618.—¹ Dr. Richard Robinson, afterwards Lord Rokeby.

panion to Madame de Sévigné's Hôtel de Carnavalet, and call them my *Penseroso* and *Allegro*. Sir Edward was disappointed at your not revising his pentachord², for you inventors are jealous gods; but I assured him you had left town in a very few days after you were with him.

I am to dine on Monday at the Hôtel d'Harcourt³. The town says the father's kingdom is soon to be invaded by the Spaniards; but the ministers, who certainly ought to know best, swear it is not true; so to be sure it is not.

I forgot to tell you that our friend Mrs. D.⁴ is one of the warmest admirers of Gray's *Life*; but then she is equally charmed with Mrs. Chapone's writings, and thinks they will go a great way towards making the Bible fashionable. She lent them to me, but alas! they could not have so much effect on me, had I wanted it, for I could not read the Madam's works themselves.

Have you had your summer, as we have? The fine ladies did not dare to ride on the causeway from Wednesday was se'nnight till last Friday, for fear of being tanned. We are now relapsed to fires. Adieu.

Yours most devotedly,

H. W.

P.S. I like the Hôtel d'Harcourt; it has *grand air* and a kind of Louis XIV old-fashionhood that pleases me. There is a large garden and new *parterre*, and we want some *treillage* if the Irish Exchequer would afford it. Lord N. says Oxford pouts at you as well as Cambridge. Lord

² An instrument invented by Sir Edward Walpole.

³ Harcourt House, in Cavendish Square.

⁴ Doubtless Mrs. Delany, who was on very friendly terms with both Mason and Walpole. She wrote to her brother, Mr. Granville (apparently in the year 1775), 'I have amused

myself lately with Mr. Mason's publication of Mr. Gray's *Memoirs* and liked them extreamly. Mr. Mason's zeal for his friend is very amiable.' Mrs. Delany was also an admirer of the works of Mrs. Hester Chapone (1727-1801), *née* Mulso, authoress of *Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*.

Lyttelton does not admire. Mr. Palgrave, who was here this morning, says all the world admires, which is more than I demand. Pray, because you have written *the book*, do you never design to write anything else? Is the *English Garden* to be a fragment, and do you expect that anybody should finish it and write your life, as well as you have done both for Gray?

1619. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 17, 1775.

IF you could not help writing, my dear Sir, to tell me of your nephew's arrival, I can as little help wishing you joy of it, though I wrote to you but last week. I told you how pleased and charmed you would be with him; and you must allow I am a good judge of the harmony of such natures as yours and his. Keep him as long as you can, and may the pure air of Florence restore Lady Lucy's¹ health!

I have nothing of news to add to my last. The ministers are easy about the Spanish fleet. For France, she has business of her own. There have been great tumults even in Paris on the dearness of corn. The King is already angry with his restored Parliament, who, fancying itself restored to liberty, took upon itself to examine the rioters. The new Well-beloved posted to his *lit de justice*, but was in such a passion that, though he attempted it four times, he could not speak; others may fancy he wanted words from more causes than one. I saw a gentleman the other day just arrived from Paris, who says the clergy are suspected of having excited the commotions. The ministers, who fear the return of the Duc de Choiseul, choose to impute them to him.

LETTER 1619.—¹ Lady Lucy Mann, wife of the younger Sir Horace.

When I came out of town Lord Temple was thought dying². The Duchess of Northumberland is still alive.

By what you say of Mr. Seymour³, the Pretender and his wife should be at Paris; is that so? All the English seem to be in love with her: at least the future Lord Temple⁴ was so.

You have not more masquerades in carnival than we have; there is one at the Pantheon to-night, another on Monday; and in June is to be a pompous one on the water, and at Ranelagh. This and the first are given by the club called the *Scavoir Vivre*, who till now have only shone by excess of gaming. The leader is that fashionable orator Lord Lyttelton⁵, of whom I need not tell *you* more. I have done with these diversions, and enjoy myself here. Your old acquaintance, Lord and Lady Dacre, and your old friend Mr. Chute, dined with me to-day: poor Lord Dacre⁶ is carried about, though not worse than he has been these twenty years. Strawberry was in great beauty; what joy I should have in showing it to you! Is this a wish I must never indulge? Alas!

I have had a long chain of thoughts since I wrote the last paragraph. They ended in smiling at the word *never*. How one pronounces it to the last moment! Would not one think I counted on a long series of years to come? Yet no man has the termination of all his views more before his eyes, or knows better the idleness of framing visions to oneself. One passes away so soon, and worlds succeed to worlds, in which the occupiers build the same castles in the air. What is ours but the present moment? And how many of mine are gone! And what do I want

² He lived until 1779.

³ Henry Seymour, of Knoyle, Wiltshire. Mann mentioned that he admired the Countess of Albany.

⁴ Richard Grenville, who became the second Earl Temple. *Walpole*.—

He became the third Earl.

⁵ Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton; he had been at Florence. *Walpole*.

⁶ Thomas Lennard Barrett; his wife was sister of Lord Camden. *Walpole*.

to show you? A plaything-vision, that has amused a poor transitory mortal for a few hours, and that will pass away like its master! Well, and yet is it not as sensible to conform to common ideas, and to live while one lives? Perhaps the wisest way is to cheat oneself. Did one concentrate all one's thoughts on the nearness and certainty of dissolution, all the world would lie eating and sleeping like the savage Americans. Our wishes and views were given us to gild the dream of life, and if a Strawberry Hill can soften the decays of age, it is wise to embrace it, and due gratitude to the Great Giver to be happy with it. The true pain is the reflection on the numbers that are not so blessed; yet I have no doubt but the real miseries of life—I mean those that are unmerited and unavoidable,—will be compensated to the sufferers. Tyrants are a proof of an hereafter. Millions of men cannot be formed for the sport of a cruel child.

How happy is the Pretender in missing a crown! When dead, he will have all the advantage that other kings have, the being remembered; and that greater advantage, which kings who die in their childhood have, historians will say, he would have been a great king if he had lived to reign; and that greatest advantage which so very few of them have, his reign will be stained with no crimes and blunders. If he is at Florence, pray recommend me to him for his historian; you see I have all the qualities a monarch demands, I am disposed to flatter him. You may tell him too what I have done for his uncle Richard III⁷. The deuce is in it if I am not qualified for a Royal Historiographer, when I have whitewashed one of the very few whom my brethren, so contrary to their custom, have agreed to traduce. Adieu!

⁷ Alluding to his *Historic Doubts* concerning Richard III.

22nd.

Our papers will tell you, or your own, that the Queen of Denmark is dead—happily for her, I think, if she had any feeling. They say it was a rapid putrid fever. I know no more of it, for I am but this moment come to town to get my mourning.

1620. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

May 27, 1775.

To Mrs. Crewe¹,

By the Honourable Charles Fox.

Where the loveliest Expression to Feature is join'd,
 By Nature's most delicate pencil design'd,
 Where Blushes unbidden and Smiles without Art
 Speak the sweetness and feeling that dwell in the heart;
 Where in Manners enchanting no Blemish we trace,
 But the Soul keeps the Promise we had from the Face,
 Sure Philosophy, Reason, and Coldness must prove
 Defences unequal to shield us from Love.
 Then tell me, mysterious Enchanter, O tell
 By what wonderful Art, or by what magic Spell,
 My Heart is so fenc'd, that for once I am wise
 And gaze without Madness on Amoret's eyes:
 That my Wishes which never were bounded before,
 Are here bounded by Friendship, and ask for no more.
 Is it Reason? No, that my whole Life will belie,
 For who so at variance as Reason and I?
 Is't Ambition that fills up each Chink of my Heart,
 Nor allows to one softer Sensation a Part?
 Ah! no! for in this all the World must agree,
 That one Folly was never sufficient for me.
 Is my Mind on Distress so intensely employ'd?
 Or by Pleasure relax'd or Variety cloy'd?

LETTER 1620.—¹ Frances (d. 1818), daughter of Fulke Greville; m. (1766) John Crewe, of Crewe Hall, Cheshire,

who was created Baron Crewe in 1806.

For, alike in this only, Enjoyment and Pain
 Both slacken the Springs of the Nerves which they strain.
 That I've felt each Reverse that from Fortune can flow,
 That I've tasted each Bliss which the Happiest know,
 Has still been the whimsical Fate of my Life,
 Where Anguish and Joy have been ever at strife.
 But though vers'd in th' extremes both of Pleasure and
 Pain,

I am still but too ready to feel them again.
 If then for this once in my Life I am free,
 And escape from a Snare might catch wiser than me,
 'Tis that Beauty alone but imperfectly charms,
 For though Brightness may dazzle, 'tis Kindness that warms.
 As on Suns in the Winter with Pleasure we gaze,
 But feel not their force, though their Splendour we praise;
 So Beauty our just Admiration may claim,
 But Love, and Love only, our Hearts can inflame.

As I design to be very temperate in writing to you, you would not receive so sudden a return to yours, were it not to send you the foregoing verses, which, though current, are not yet got into the papers or magazines. I think you will like the ease and frankness of the lines, though they are not poetic: in that light, and as characteristic, they are pretty original—so they are for being love-verses without love; the author's reason for not having which is the worst part; and if poetry was peremptory logic, the inference would be that you must be in love with a woman before you can desire her: at least she must be in love with you, which I take to be seldom the case.

I am to have a longer copy of verses by Fitzpatrick², which I expect to like much, since he writes as easily as his friend, and is a more genuine poet. Lord Carlisle has written some too, to his wife's sister, Lady Louisa Leveson³:

² *Dorinda, a Town Eclogue*, printed at Strawberry Hill, as were Fox's verses.

³ Lady Louisa Leveson-Gower, daughter of second Earl Gower (afterwards Marquis of Stafford);

I shall have them too, as a *noble* author's—but I have seen them and they are not worth sending; no more than some by Lord Palmerston, occasioned by others written some time ago by the Duchess of Devonshire when a girl to her father. These are a greater rarity, and I am laying out for them. Thank my stars I have done both with authorship and noble authors, for my Lord Lyttelton has printed a speech, though I thought we should not have had his till his execution. It is a poor affair, void of argument and grossly abusive on Lord Camden. It will be as difficult for the court to uphold his oratory as his character, if he has recourse to the press.

Burke has printed a second speech⁴, which I prefer much to his first. It is grave, solid, temperate, and chaster from exuberant imagination. If his fancy breaks out, it does not soar above the third heaven and come tumbling down flat. Apropos to authors, the husband⁵ of Mrs. Montagu of Shakespeareshire is dead, and has left her an estate of seven thousand pounds a year in her own power. Will you come and be a candidate for her hand? I conclude it will be given to a champion at some Olympic games, and were I she, I would sooner marry you than Pindar.

The history of the heroine Kingston, as registered in our daily chronicles, is literally authentic, and so is the respect paid to her in the King's Bench, though, I suppose, penned by herself,

For little Brimstones oft submit to fate,
That great ones may enjoy the world in state.

The intrepidity of her countenance, while her indictment was being read, was worthy of Joan of Arc. I am persuaded she will avoid any further trial.

m. (1777) Sir Archibald Macdonald, afterwards Chief Baron of the Exchequer.

⁴ On Conciliation with America.

⁵ Edward Montagu, grandson of first Earl of Sandwich.

Thank you for your Oxonian anecdotes, but alas! they may be paralleled all over the kingdom. In return I will write next week to France for the two tracts⁶ you wot of: you shall not be idle for want of anything I can pimp for.

I am happily embarked on two vast folios of the *History of Dorsetshire*, which I prefer to every author of the age but one. I have picked up some excellent narratives of Mr. Bruce, but have not room for them; but here is what is better. He was asked before George Selwyn if the Abyssinians have any music? he replied, 'They have one *lyre*.' Selwyn whispered his neighbour, 'They have one less since he left their country.' Adieu! I remove to Strawberry to-morrow.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1621. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1775.

I AM delighted in your satisfaction with your nephew; and now begin to fear the pain you will have in parting with him and his amiable family. The Emperor's presence will not compensate the loss, for you feel more in your private capacity than your public, though you are so excellent a *diplomate*. You must lower your royal crest a little, for your Majesty's forces have received a check in America; but this is too sad a subject for mirth. I cannot tell you anything very positively: the ministers, nay the orthodox *Gazette*, holds its tongue. This day se'nnight it was divulged by a London *Evening Post* extraordinary, that a ship on its way to Lisbon happened to call at England, and left some very wonderful accounts, nay, and affidavits, saying, to wit, that General Gage had sent nine

⁶ Watelet's Essay on Gardening, and Chabanon's *Sur la Manie des Jardins Anglais*.

hundred men to nail up the cannon and seize a magazine at Concord¹; of which the accidental captain owns, two cannon were spiked or damaged. An hundred and fifty Americans, who swear they were fired on first, disliked the proceeding, returned blows, and drove back the party. Lord Percy was dispatched to support them, but new recruits arriving, his Lordship sent for better advice, which he received, as it was, to retire, which he did. The King's troops lost an hundred and fifty, the enemy not an hundred. The captain was sent for to be examined, but refused. He says Gage sent away a sloop four days before he sailed, which sloop, I suppose, is gone to Lisbon, for in eight days no news of it. The public were desired by authority to suspend their belief; but their patience is out, and they persist in believing the first account, which seems the rather probable, in that another account is come of the mob having risen at New York, between anger and triumph, and have seized, unloaded, and destroyed the cargoes of two ships that were going with supplies to Gage; and, by all accounts, that whole continent is in a flame.

So here is this fatal war commenced !

The child that is unborn shall rue
The hunting of that day !

We are perfectly easy about Spain's armada, and say that too is bound for Lisbon. The Prince of Masserano is arrived, and no doubt condemns our rebellious colonists highly. Those gentlemen do not seem to be at all afraid of your question, whether they could not be sent for over, and tried. A colonel of their militia has sworn before a justice of peace that he ordered his men to fire on the King's troops,

LETTER 1621.—¹ The skirmish at Lexington on April 19, 1775, the first fighting which took place be-

tween the regular troops and the Americans.

and has sent over a copy of his affidavit—perhaps in hopes of being knighted.

Well, we don't mind all this—we the nation. We go on diverting ourselves, and are to have a regatta on the Thames the end of this month. The French are grown *philosophes*, and we dance. Tell your sorrowful friend Mrs. Pitt, and the afflicted widow, that English ladies cry no longer. Low spirits are out of fashion. We have transplanted every folly under the heavens hither. We have had fandangos, and festinos, and regattas. If the Americans provoke us, we will sail forth in our Bucentaur and cuckold them with their spouse the Atlantic.

This is a gazette extraordinary, so need not be long; besides, I have been here these four days all alone, and know nothing but what the newspapers tell me. If it was not for you, I should not know there was such a person in the world as the Emperor. Our neighbour King Louis is gone to be crowned. He was besieged for three days in Versailles by twenty thousand men, and in danger of Lord Peterborough's² *sacre*, who, when he was shown the Sainte Ampoule at Rheims, and the monk asked him, 'Monsieur, est-ce que vous sacrez vos Rois?' replied, 'Non, Monsieur, nous les massacrons.' Insurrections in France! insurrections in Bohemia! insurrections in America! methinks the world is subject to centenary fevers! Adieu! the Horatii! I quite enjoy your mutual satisfaction in each other.

1622. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1775.

I AM extremely concerned, dear Sir, to hear you have been so long confined by the gout. The painting of your house may, from the damp, have given you cold—I don't

² Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, celebrated by Pope. *Walpole*.

conceive that paint can affect one otherwise, if it does not make one sick, as it does me of all things. Dr. Heberden, as every physician, to make himself talked of, will set up some new hypothesis, pretends that a damp house, and even damp sheets, which have ever been reckoned fatal, are wholesome; to prove his faith he went into his own new house totally unaired, and survived it. At Malvern they certainly put patients into sheets just dipped in the spring—however, I am glad you have a better proof that dampness is not mortal: and it is better to be too cautious than too rash. I am perfectly well and expect to be so for a year and a half—I desire no more of the bootikins than to curtail my fits.

Thank you for the note from North's life, though, having reprinted my *Painters*, I shall never have an opportunity of using it. I am still more obliged to you for the offer of an index to my *Catalogue*—but, as I myself know exactly where to find everything in it, and as I dare to say nobody else will want it, I shall certainly not put you to that trouble.

Dr. Glynn will certainly be most welcome to see my house, and shall, if I am not at home. Still I had rather know a few days before, because else he may happen to come when I have company, as I have often at this time of the year, and then it is impossible to let it be seen, as I cannot ask my company, who may have come to see it too, to go out, that somebody else may see it, and I should be very sorry to have the Doctor disappointed. These difficulties, which have happened more than once, have obliged me to give every ticket for a particular day; therefore, if Dr. Glynn will be so good as to advertise me of the day he intends to come here, with a direction, I will send him word what day he can see it.

I have just run through the two vast folios of Hutchins's

Dorsetshire. He has taken infinite pains; indeed, all but those that would make it entertaining.

Pray can you tell me anything of some relations of my own, the Burwells? My grandfather married Sir Jeffery Burwell's daughter, of Rougham in Suffolk. Sir Jeffery's mother, I imagine, was daughter of a Jeffery Pitman, of Suffolk; at least I know there was such a man as the latter, and that we quarter the arms of Pitman. But I cannot find who Lady Burwell¹, Sir Jeffery's wife, was. Edmondson has searched in vain in the Heralds' Office, and I have outlived all the ancient of my family so long, that I know not of whom to inquire, but you of the neighbourhood. There is an old walk in the park at Houghton, called Sir Jeffery's Walk, where the old gentleman used to teach my father, Sir Robert, his book. Those very old trees encouraged my father to plant at Houghton, when people used to try to persuade him nothing would grow there. He said, 'Why will not other trees grow as well as those in Sir Jeffery's Walk?' Other trees have grown to some purpose! Did I ever tell you that my father was descended from Lord Burleigh? The latter's grand-daughter, by his son Exeter, married Sir Giles Allington, whose daughter married Sir Robert Crane, father of Sir Edward Walpole's wife. I want but Lady Burwell's name to make my genealogic tree shoot out stems every way.

I have recovered a barony in fee, which has no defect but in being antecedent to any summons to Parliament, that of the Fitz Osberts; and on my mother's side it has mounted the Lord knows whither, by the Philipps's to Henry VIII, and has sucked in Dryden for a great-uncle; and by Lady Philipps's mother, Darcy, to Edward III,

LETTER 1622.—¹ She was the daughter of Thomas Derehaugh, of Colston Hall, Suffolk.

and there I stop, for brevity's sake—especially as Edward III is a second Adam; who almost is not descended from Edward? as posterity will be from Charles II and all the princes in Europe from James I. I am the first antiquary of my race—people don't know how entertaining a study it is. Who begot whom is a most amusing kind of hunting; one recovers a grandfather instead of breaking one's own neck—and then one grows so pious to the memory of a thousand persons one never heard of before. One finds how Christian names came into a family, with a world of other delectable erudition. You cannot imagine how vexed I was that Blomfield² died before he arrived at Houghton—I had promised myself a whole crop of notable ancestors—but I think I have pretty well unkennelled them myself. Adieu! dear Sir.

Yours ever,
H. W.

P.S. I found a family of Whaplode in Lincolnshire who give our arms, and have persuaded myself that Whaplode is a corruption of Walpole, and came from a branch when we lived at Walpole in Lincolnshire.

1623. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, June 12.

I RECOMMEND this with your two tracts on gardening¹ to Mr. Fraser; you see I hasten to send you straw, that your brick-kiln may blaze. I shall send you soon Fitzpatrick's *Town Eclogue*, from my own furnace. The verses are charmingly smooth and easy, but I am much mistaken

² Rev. Francis Blomefield (1705–1752), who died before he had completed his *History of Norfolk*.

LETTER 1623.—Misplaced by C.

amongst letters of 1774. (See *Notes and Queries*, Oct. 9, 1897.)

¹ See note on letter to Mason of May 27, 1775.

if you like them so well as Charles Fox's, as the former have certainly no novelty to recommend them, though there is one line about *squeezing*² that is delightful.

The *Manie des Jardins Anglois* is very silly, and unpoetic even for French verse. T'other author³ has stolen all his ideas from us, and is ungrateful, is very French too, absurd and superficial, meaning to be philosophic; has no idea of situation, but thinks it can be made; and in reality does not conceive helping or improving nature, but would make puppet-shows for different ranks. He puts me in mind of one of his countrymen, who seeing some of ours hang up their hats on a row of pegs at a tavern, said, 'On voit bien que c'est une nation qui pense.' I think they are ten times more foolish since they took to thinking.

By the waters of Babylon we sit down and weep, when we think of thee, O America! Tribulation on tribulation! Since Gage's defeat, eighteen, some say twenty-eight thousand men have invested Boston; ten thousand more are on their march from Rhode Island. Two ships laden with provisions for him have been destroyed at New York, and all his Majesty's friends turned out thence. *Nous ne sçavons plus à quel saint nous vouer*. The City says there must be a pacification and a change of actors. Much good may it do those who will read their parts! Old *Garrick*⁴ perhaps will return to the stage, because he has no time to lose:—however, the manager's company⁵ talks of a troop of Hessians, &c.

I have got another noble author, Lord Mahon. He writes on the gold coin; if he can make gold as well as coin, he will be of great use to his father-in-law *Garrick*, and a very good prop to his administration. Your old

² 'And oh! what bliss, when each alike is pleased,
The hand that squeezes, and the hand that's squeezed.'

³ A M. Watelet.

⁴ Lord Chatham.

⁵ The Ministry.

Pollio⁶ is returned very lean and very deaf. Considering all things, methinks you might now hold a lodge, Mr. Mason. Adieu!

P.S. Here is the *Eclogue*.

1624. TO VISCOUNT NUNEHAM.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1775.

HAVING been absent hence a few days, I have but just now received your Lordship's most kind note with the direction, or should certainly have thanked you sooner, as I do most gratefully. I shall as gladly obey your commands before you go to Ireland, and will take the liberty of writing to know if my visit will not be unseasonable.

I am exceedingly concerned to hear of Lady Nuneham's loss¹, and when it is proper will entreat your Lordship to say how very much I interest myself in whatever touches her Ladyship.

Mr. Fitzpatrick has written a *Town Eclogue*, and has let me print it. The subject is not new, but as the versification is very good, I thought it might divert a melancholy quarter of an hour at Nuneham, and therefore enclose. I know it is not just the moment for mentioning it, or I would say how very preferably my press might be employed, if I could have my earnest wish. How sincerely do I say what is reduced to a common ceremony, that I am with the greatest regard your Lordship's, &c.

⁶ Lord Holderness.

LETTER 1624.—¹ The death of her

sister, Hon. Catherine Vernon, third daughter of first Baron Vernon.

1625. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Friday night, 11 o'clock, June 23, 1775.

You was much in the right indeed, Madam, not to come to town for the foolish regatta, as I did, and of which I have seen no more than I do now. I went at six o'clock to Richmond House, and it was beautiful to see the Thames covered with boats, barges, and streamers, and every window and house-top loaded with spectators. I suppose so many will not meet again till the Day of Judgement, which was not to-day.

In the middle of the river was a street of lighters and barges covered with pent-houses like a carpenter's yard, which totally prevented all the other millions seeing anything. The rowers passed through this street, and so we never beheld them at all. It rained once or twice and cleared the gardens and shores, and now all the company is stewing in Ranelagh. A great deal of the show was spoilt by everybody being in black; it looked like a general mourning for Amphitrite, rather than for the Queen of Denmark. The *corps diplomatique* was in the Lord Mayor's barge. There are such tides of people in the streets, that I could scarce pass home. I feel as glad to be returned as I did from the Coronation, and I think will go to no more sights.

I know nothing more to tell your Ladyship. The town says it expects an embassy to Lord Chatham. I will not come to see his entry, for I have still less curiosity about ministers than puppet-shows. In truth I grow so old or so indolent, or so both, that I prefer the tranquillity of Strawberry to almost everything. But I will not tire your Ladyship with my own negativeness. I write only to prove what I hope is not necessary, how constantly you are

in my mind, and that I would tell you anything amusing if I knew it.

1626. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, July 6, 1775.

A MONTH is elapsed since I wrote to you, I know ; nor am I eager to resume the correspondence, when I have nothing pleasant to tell you. Indeed, can the events of a civil war ever be welcome news? One must be deeply embarked on one side or the other, if one ever rejoices. They who wish well to the whole can have but one cheerful moment, which is that of peace—a moment that seems at great distance! I know no details, for I inquire not after them. The general complexion is war. All advices speak the Americans determined, and report says the Government here intends to pursue the same plan. I told you at first I thought you and I should not see the end of this breach ; and if we do not, I know what posterity will see, the ruin of both countries, at least of this. Can we support the loss of America, or a long war?

There is a black cloud nearer. The Livery of London have begun a quarrel with the King, and have actually proclaimed war on his ministers, as you will see by the papers. I do not take panic ; but, if any blow should happen from America, the mob of London is a formidable foe on a sudden : a minister may be executed before he is impeached ; and, considering the number of American merchants in the City, and of those who have connections in America, riots may be raised : but I hate to prophesy. I have always augured ill of this quarrel, and washed my hands of it. It has made me resume a thought, which my age and indolence do not incline me to, another journey to Paris. You will, perhaps, hear I am setting out before

my usual period of writing. There is another person¹ going abroad that rejoices me more, and who, I am sure, had better be out of England at this crisis. He is extremely well at present, yet certainly should not risk the winter here; he proposes to pass the next at Rome. I should like myself to spend it at Paris, but dare not hazard the gout out of my own house, unless things grow still more serious. I have long been sick of politics; when they are so very grave, they are painful; and though I have nothing to do with them, the ill-humour they occasion, and the perpetual discourse on them, are exceedingly disagreeable to one whose whole wishes are centred in repose.

I am come this morning from Lord Dacre's², where I lay last night, and return to my peaceful hill to-morrow. I will not read history there, but romances; and if the present age is determined the former shall be written in bloody characters, I will read as little of it as I can. During the first part of my life all was peace and happiness. The middle was a scene of triumph. I am sorry to think the last volume so likely to resemble a considerable part of our story. Who can wish to have lived during the wars of York and Lancaster; or from 1641 to 1660?

1627. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, July 7, 1775.

It is strange to say, Madam, that I who generally know my own mind as soon as I have a mind, and who am a very methodical general, have not yet settled the plan of my operations for my summer campaign. One of my expeditions will certainly be to Ampthill; but I cannot precisely say

LETTER 1626.—¹ The Duke of Gloucester.

² Belhus, in Essex.

when, as I have not fixed the day when my squadron is to sail for the coast of France, which is to be the great *coup* of my measures. I do not stay to join or to watch the Spanish Armada, nor wait for the result of the American Congress; but a little business of my own throws uncertainty into all my deliberations, and is so little a business, that, like greater men, I am forced to disguise the true cause, and give it dignity by a veil of mystery. I have indeed already taken the field, for I came yesterday from Lord Dacre's, in Essex, where I stayed but one night, and am returning to my head quarters. I found nobody and heard nothing here, but a new rebuff given us by the Americans—I will not tell you where, because geography is not my forte, nor circumstances my talent; but they have burnt a schooner, and driven General Gage's devils out of a herd of swine, who ran violently into the sea, and lo! is not the place called Hog Island¹ to this day?

Pray, Madam, have you read the *Correspondents*²? I never heard of the book till two days ago. I think one cannot doubt the letters being genuine; but who has been so cruel as to publish them? and yet, except a little weakness, and it is very little to have but a little, there is nothing that can reflect but on the publishers. Methinks, when it is scandalous to open a private letter, they who publish private letters stand in a very foul predicament, while the authors are living and may be hurt by them. Do not the publishers accuse themselves of robbing or treachery? and by concealing themselves of a very black design? The publication in question comprehends many of these offences, for it appears by the letters that the authors were much afraid of their being seen, though more goodness of heart appears than

LETTER 1627.—¹ The skirmish at Hogg's Island took place in May.

² In his letter to Mason of July 10,

1775, Horace Walpole seems to hint at Lord Lyttelton and his daughter-in-law as the writers of the letters.

anything else. Merciful! if all the foolish things one writes in confidence were to be recorded! For my part I never care how silly I am in my letters, as I trust nonsense carries its own mortality along with it. At least if one is supposed to have common sense, one may trust, as Sir Godfrey Kneller did about his wretched daubings, that people will say, 'Oh, to be sure these could not be his.' I am not averse to preaching a little on this subject, my Lady, because—but somebody knocks. Good morrow, Madam.

1628. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1775.

THE whole business of this letter would lie in half a line. Shall you have room for me on Tuesday the 18th? I am putting myself into motion that I may go farther. I told Madame du Deffand how you had scolded me on her account, and she has charged me to thank you, and tell you how much she wishes to see you too. I would give anything to go—But the going!—However, I really think I shall—But I grow terribly affected with a *maladie de famille*, that of taking root at home.

I did but put my head into London on Thursday, and more bad news from America. I wonder when it will be bad enough to make folks think it so, without going on! The stocks, indeed, begin to grow a little nervous, and they are apt to affect other pulses. I heard this evening here that the Spanish fleet is sailed, and that we are not in the secret whither¹—but I don't answer for Twickenham gazettes, and I have no better. I have a great mind to tell you a Twickenham story; and yet it will be good for nothing, as I cannot send you the accent in a letter. Here it is, and you must try to set it to the right emphasis. One

LETTER 1628.—¹ The fleet sailed to attack Algiers.

of our Maccaronis is dead, a Captain Mawhood, the tea-man's son. He had quitted the army, because his comrades called him Captain Hyson, and applied himself to learn the classics and freethinking; and was always disputing with the parson of the parish about Dido and his own soul. He married Miss Paulin's warehouse, who had six hundred a year; but, being very much out of conceit with his own canister, could not reconcile himself to her riding-hood—so they parted beds in three nights. Of late he has taken to writing comedies, which everybody was welcome to hear him read, as he could get nobody to act them. Mrs. Mawhood has a friend, one Mrs. V——, a mighty plausible good sort of body, who feels for everybody, and a good deal for herself, is of a certain age, wears well, has some pretensions that she thinks very reasonable still, and a gouty husband. Well! she was talking to Mr. Raftor about Captain Mawhood a little before he died. 'Pray, Sir, does the Captain ever communicate his writings to Mrs. Mawhood?'—'Oh dear, no, Madam; he has a sovereign contempt for her understanding.'—'Poor woman!'—'And pray, Sir,—give me leave to ask you: I think I have heard that they very seldom sleep together?'—'Oh, never, Madam! Don't you know all that?'—'*Poor woman!*'—I don't know whether you will laugh; but Mr. Raftor, who tells a story better than anybody, made me laugh for two hours. Good night!

1629. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1775.

I HAVE been so constantly here and know so little, that if I told you what I do know, it would be but a transcript of the newspapers. The general opinion is that the war is to be pursued: and so far we and the Americans agree that the news in the meadows (our Mall) last night was, that the

Congress has taken the same resolution; and as they have not quite so far to send troops, will probably be a little more alert in putting their resolutions in execution. The Admiral, I was told, too, thinks he shall be desired to convey the garrison of Boston, not into the heart of the colonies, but home. I am amazed the Parliament does not meet and vote that this will be a breach of the Act of Navigation. The colonies are really so cowardly, that they go on like the old song, beating those who never beat them in their lives, and have driven away all the cattle from General Gage's Smithfield, and burnt a schooner that he sent to defend them. As the stocks have shown no sensibility till now, I suppose some rich *butcher* has sold out. This is all I can tell you of politics.

To your other question, I doubt I shall not see Yorkshire this summer. I am actually thinking of a tour to Paris; and if I do go, it will be before the end of August. Shall I bring you a slice of their English gardens? or a whole one second-hand? They may be out of fashion by this time, and the moment anything is, they sell it.

Has a little book called the *Correspondents* strolled so far north? It is a singular publication, and an abominable one; at least I suspect the motive to be so. They are letters between a late grave noble author¹ and his daughter-in-law, before she married his son: they are perfectly innocent, and very good and very wise; but the spirit was not always entirely uppermost. They seem to be genuine, but if they are, one must guess and abhor the publisher.

Mrs. Wood publishes an Essay, which her husband² showed me and I liked, on Homer's country. My late brethren, the Antiquaries, have given a third volume, with some pretty plates of horns, and some trifling trinkets,

LETTER 1629. — ¹ Perhaps Lord Lyttelton.

² Robert Wood, sometime Under Secretary of State; d. 1771.

dissertations on cock-fighting and shoeing horses, and half a volume on their print of the interview in the Vale of Cloth of Gold, and the room at Cowdry³, in which I am censured for liking it only as a curiosity and not as a picture, though there is no more perspective or drawing than in an Indian screen. To stamp my doom, in the index is said, *the Cowdry picture defended against Mr. W.*—see what it is to try to teach owls to be singing-birds! I was the first soul that ever endeavoured to introduce a little taste into English antiquities, and had persuaded the world not to laugh at our Hearnese and Hollingsheds, and the graceless loggerheads fly in my face! but I have left them to themselves, and could not have left them in worse hands.

This letter is only chaperon to a parcel that I must beg you to convey to Peckitt at York, and which I send open to save troubling you with the purport (is not this an *Ironicism*?): when you have read it or not, as you please, you will be so good as to seal it.

July 12th.

Since I began my letter two days ago, I have taken my resolution; and shall set out on the 14th of next month, to be back in the beginning of October, by which time I suppose you will have frightened the Americans out of their senses, or the Americans the ministers into theirs.

I have not yet seen the reviews for this month; those of the last were exceedingly civil to you. One piece of service you have rendered me. The proprietor of the asterisk⁴ on Lord Clarendon's *History* has certainly reconnoitred himself,

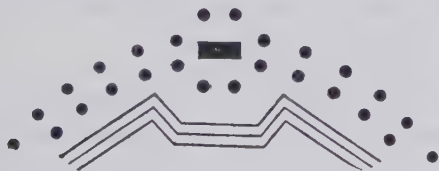
³ The frescoed room at Cowdray was thus mentioned in the *Anecdotes of Painting*:—'Though the histories represented there, the habits and customs of the times, make that room a singular curiosity, they are its only merit. There is nothing good either in the designs, disposition, or colouring.' The frescoes

perished in the fire of 1793.

⁴ Richard Owen Cambridge, whose name is represented by two asterisks in Mason's *Memoirs of Gray*. His criticisms on Clarendon's *Life* (before its publication) are mentioned in Gray's letter to Mason of July 23, 1759.

for he has not called on me since the publication, though very civil when we meet, yet never opening his mouth on that subject. I bear this misfortune with great philosophy, as I always do everything I do not care about.

My Lord of Rochester⁵ has consulted me for an altar-piece for the choir at Westminster. I have suggested an octagon canopy of open arches, like Chichester Cross, to be elevated on a flight of steps, with the altar in the middle, and semi-circular arcades to join the stalls, so that the Confessor's chapel and tombs may be seen through in perspective. His Lordship, indeed, wanted to remove that whole chapel, but his Chapter luckily opposed. Here is the ground-plot of my idea: if you approve it you may draw the elevation as beautifully as you please.



1630. TO VISCOUNT NUNEHAM.

Strawberry Hill, July 18, 1775.

I SHALL be at Park Place next week, my dear Lord, and if you assure me that I shall not be troublesome either to Lady Nuneham or yourself, I will have the honour of passing a night at Nuneham, and asking your commands to Paris, whither I am going next month,—with great satisfaction in one respect, the certainty of finding the Hôtel d'Harcourt open next winter. I should be ashamed of such a trip at my age, if it was not to see an older person; yet I shall not go *incog.* and call myself *Dr. W.*¹, but what I always am, &c.

⁵ John Thomas; d. 1793.

LETTER 1630.—¹ Lord Mansfield,

on a recent visit to Paris, had called himself 'Dr. Murray.'

1631. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 23, 1775.

LADY, thou lettest not thy servant depart in peace! but you must. My pen is truly grown a *grey* goose-quill, and has lost its pith. It never had much imagination, and what it had is gone. Indolence has taken total possession, and comprises my whole story. I have done nothing but bask in the sun, gather hampers of orange-flowers, and enjoy this celestial summer. I believe Joshua has bid the sun stand still, for there has not been a bad day since the first of December. I had rather impute my supineness to this Asiatic season than to the fifty-seven winters I have known; but I must burst my chains and go to Paris, which I doubt I shall not find a *fontaine de jouvence*.

I have dined at Muswell Hill, and the next day the Beauclerks, Miss Lloyd and I, went to Old Windsor to see poor Mr. Bateman's auction. It was a melancholy sight to me in more lights than one. I have passed many pleasing days there with him and Lady Hervey, and felt additional pain by reflections on my child Strawberry!

All pulled to pieces, and sold by the person he loved and left it to! So was poor Lady Hervey treated! I bought her picture there, left for sale. Indeed, Lord Bateman made amends, for he left his own and his house's portraits there too for sale, with a lot of shalots, four acres of beans, and a parcel of human bones! This is a golden age literally, and one should not wonder if the people sold their children as the negroes do. I purchased a cargo of ancient chairs¹, and they at least have found a resting-place in their old age. The Beauclerks and the Virgin returned and passed two days

LETTER 1631. — ¹ 'Eight very placed in the Great Cloister at ancient Welsh chairs;' they were Strawberry Hill.

here. On Wednesday I go to Park Place and Nuneham; but I perceive I shall lose my place of gazetteer to your Ladyship. Perhaps you will think I am going to have a better, when I tell you an excellent story and quote my author, Lord North. Mr. Cambridge, with all his propensity to credit new-imported marvels, was struck with hearing Mr. Bruce affirm having sent some camels to Abyssinia, and suspended his faith till the fact could be examined. He galloped² to Soame Jenyns, and begged to have the registers of exportation in the Board of Trade searched. After some days, Jenyns wrote to tell him that he had scrutinized all the records relating to Philadelphia, Carolina, Virginia, &c., &c., and did indeed find a prodigious number of the species in question had gone to all those provinces, but that they did not spell their names like the *camels* he wotted of.

Well, Madam, if I have moulted my activity, at least my obedience remains in full feather. You say you have written and sealed your justification of yourself and your opinion of the *Correspondents*, but I am sure I have received no such letter. I will say no more on mine; I have no affectation about them; you see I answer the moment I receive yours, and the nonsense in waiting always serves to fill them. If they are preserved, they will prove that I took no care of my reputation, and that your Ladyship had not the best taste in the world in being content with such letters. One comfort the worst writers may have, that, if their follies are handed down, the devil will be in it if any mortal can read a hundred-thousandth part of what is written; and it signifies little whether such things are burnt or slumber on the shelves of a library.

² Cambridge habitually rode fast.

1632. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 3, 1775.

I CAN tell your Ladyship nothing about the *Correspondents* but what I *don't* know, which is what people generally tell.

I did believe the letters genuine, and that they passed between the old Lord and his daughter-in-law before she was so. Now it seems the executors deny their authenticity, so I do not believe it any longer, because anybody is at least better authority than everybody; for one person *may* speak truth, which all the world rarely does. I know still less of Lady Luxborough's¹ *Letters*, but expect to be diverted. I remember her wearing her little wizen husband's picture in her great black bush of hair; then she fell in love with Parson Dalton² for his poetry, and they rhymed together till they chimed; and then I never saw or heard of her any more, till she revived in Mr. Shenstone's *Letters*, and was a great performer in his ballad *Arcadia*. I think these materials promise, considering too that the heroine was sister both of Lord Bolingbroke and Hollis St. John³. I expect a mixture of Mrs. Eliza Thomas⁴, Machiavel, and Shuter.

I certainly did not send you, Madam, Lady Craven's verses, nor intend it, though they are extremely pretty. She did not give me leave, and without it you know I would not. Nay, I don't think I should even with her permission,

LETTER 1632.—¹ Hon. Henrietta St. John (d. 1756), daughter of first Viscount St. John; m. (1727) Robert Knight, cr. (Aug. 8, 1745) Baron Luxborough, of Shandon in Ireland; cr. Earl of Catherlough in 1763.

² Rev. John Dalton (1709–1763), poet; he adapted *Comus* for the stage.

³ Fourth son of first Viscount St.

John; d. 1738.

⁴ Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas (1677–1731), known as 'Corinna,' a writer of poetry, and correspondent of Dryden. After endeavouring to make a livelihood in a questionable manner, she was thrown into the Fleet Prison, and died, though not actually in prison, in great poverty.

for she makes an Apollo of me, and, if the eight other Muses called me so too, I would not accept the title without any pretensions.

Tuesday se'nnight is fixed for my voyage. I doubt it will not be in my power to see Amptill till my return.

I am in great distress, with a near relation dying in my house. You have heard me mention Mrs. Daye⁵: they have let her come from Chichester in the last stage of an asthma and dropsy. I can neither leave her here with only servants, nor know how to convey her back; but I will not disturb your happiness with melancholy stories, Madam. For political mishaps, they are very endurable. One loves one's country, but then one takes no more part than comes to the share of an individual; besides, when one has lived a good while, events strike one the less. I have seen my country's barometer up at Minden and down at Derby; I have worn laurels and crackers, and sackcloth and ashes. At last I am grown like sauntering Jack, and bear revolutions with much philosophy:—

My billet at the fire is found,
Whoever is depos'd or crown'd;

but I go no farther; one has griefs enough of one's own, without fretting because Cousin America has eloped with a Presbyterian parson.

I have crammed my cloister with three cart-loads of lumbering chairs from Mr. Bateman's, and at last am surfeited with the immovable movables of our forefathers.

Thank you for advising me, Madam, not to trust to anybody's love. In good truth I am cured of that as well as of other delusions, and so will Mr. Crawford be if he lives as long. I hope he will meet me at Paris. I seldom ask him to come hither, because I cannot amuse him, and

⁵ Mrs. Day or Daye was a natural daughter of Sir Robert Walpole; she died in Oct. 1775.

because he would only disappoint me if he promised to come. There are few I have a better opinion of, or have more good will to, and he is sure he is welcome whenever he likes to come; but I care so little about the present age, which is all he can care about, that I conclude young people can only be civil and weary of me, and therefore never press myself upon them.

When I return from Paris I shall have some novelty, and you shall see me as modernized as possible. If Marshal Richelieu has a casque of pink and sable plumes, I will have one too. I will learn to sing the freshest couplets, and will be as accurate as Lady Mary Coke in all the ceremonial of Madame Clotilde's espousals⁶, though I fear the good old form of her going to bed with the ambassador's leg is out of fashion, though a Christian nudity of excellent edification. Well, now we are talking of weddings, &c., I shall take the liberty of transcribing the following lines, which Lord Huntingdon found on the window of an inn, and gave to Mr. Conway. Some tender swain had written very illegibly his fair one's name in this usual aubergical exclamation:—

Adorable Miss Priscilla Plaw!

Another unfeeling savage wrote under⁷,

.

I found Lady Jersey at Nuneham, with a pretty little girl, who will be the picture of her father as soon as she cuts her nose, and is bigger already. There was Mr. Whitehead⁸, the Laureate, too, who, I doubt, will be a little puzzled, if he has no better a victory than the last against Cæsar's next birthday. There was a little too much of the *vertere*

⁶ To the Prince of Piedmont.

⁷ The lines were considered by Lord Lyveden, the editor of the

letters to Lady Ossory, as too coarse to be printed.

⁸ William Whitehead (1715-1785).

funeribus triumphos for a complimentary ode in the last action.

I hear that the Congress have named General Washington Generalissimo, with two thousand a year and five pounds a day for his table; he desired to be excused receiving the two thousand. If these folks will imitate both the Romans and Cromwellians in self-denial and enthusiasm, we shall be horridly plagued with them. Colonel Lee⁹ is the third on the staff; I forget the second's name. They say all the regiments in Ireland are going to Boston, and fifty thousand Hanoverians coming to guard Ireland—*c'est un furieux remue-ménage*; but I don't understand these things, and wish your Ladyship good night.

1633. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 3, 1775.

IN spite of all my modesty, I cannot help thinking I have a little something of the prophet about me. At least we have not conquered America yet. I did not send you immediate word of our victory at Boston¹, because the success not only seemed very equivocal, but because the conquerors lost three to one more than the vanquished. The last do not pique themselves upon modern good breeding, but level only at the officers, of whom they have slain a vast number. We are a little disappointed, indeed, at their fighting at all, which was not in our calculation. We knew we could *conquer America in Germany*, and I doubt had better have gone thither now for that purpose, as it does not appear hitherto to be quite so feasible in America itself. However, we are determined to know the

⁹ Colonel (afterwards Major-General) Charles Lee (1731-1782). He served in the English army, 1746-74. He was appointed to a

command in the American army in June 1775.

LETTER 1633. — ¹ The battle of Bunker's Hill, on June 17, 1775.

worst, and are sending away all the men and ammunition we can muster. The Congress, not asleep neither, have appointed a Generalissimo, Washington, allowed a very able officer, who distinguished himself in the last war. Well! we had better have gone on robbing the Indies; it was a more lucrative trade.

We are in no pain about the Spanish fleet. Our papers say it has its hands full at Algiers, or Tunis, I forget which. There are so many people who take care of the geography of a war, that I never trouble my head about it. At present I am thinking of nothing but my journey to Paris, whither I am bound on the 15th. It is a little late I own for such a trip, and I did not think I should have so much resolution again; but my dear old blind woman² has begged it, and I cannot refuse, though I feel how terrible the parting will be, since I cannot expect to see her again. She is almost seventy-nine! In fact, her lamp burns as brightly as ever; but I am sure mine grows dim, and my spirits scarce serve

To rock the cradle of reposing age!

Your brother has recovered his activity so far as to go to Linton, where he has not been these four years.

Your friend, the Duchess of Beaufort³, has already found a great and proper party for Lady Mary⁴; Lord Granby⁵ has proposed, and you may be sure was not rebuffed. We have no other news but the American, which keeps our summer in full talk. Every day proclaims something, but so many lies, that I always wait for the echo; and advise you to do so too, or you will have many abortive beliefs.

² Madame la Marquise du Deffand.
Walpole.

³ Widow of Lord Noel Somerset,
Duke of Beaufort. *Walpole.*

⁴ Lady Mary Somerset.

⁵ Grandson and successor of John
Manners, Duke of Rutland. *Walpole.*

The heroine Kingston is almost forgotten. Foote had a mind to have revived her story on the stage; but Lord Hertford would not license his piece⁶. It is still thought she will be tried and convicted, but her Countess-hood will save her Duchess-hood from being burnt in its hand. Adieu!

1634. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 7, 1775.

LET me tell you you have no more taste than Dr. Kenrick¹, if you do not like Madame de Sévigné's Letters. Read them again; they are one of the very few books, that, like Gray's Life, improve upon one every time one reads them. You have still less taste, if you like my letters, which have nothing original, and if they have anything good so much the worse, for it can only be from having read her letters and his. He came perfect out of the egg-shell, and wrote as well at eighteen as ever he did; nay, letters better, for his natural humour was in its bloom, and not wrinkled by low spirits, dissatisfaction, or the character he had assumed. I do not care a straw whether Dr. Kenrick and Scotland can persuade England that he was no poet. There is no common sense left in this country:—

With Arts and Sciences it travelled West.

The Americans will admire him and you, and they are the only people by whom one would wish to be admired. The world is divided into two nations—men of sense that *will* be free, and fools that like to be slaves. What a figure do two great empires make at this moment! Spain, mistress of Peru and Mexico, amazes Europe with an invincible

⁶ It was called *A Trip to Calais*, and was acted afterwards, but much altered. *Walpole*.

LETTER 1634.—¹ William Kenrick,

LL.D. (d. 1779), who had written slightly of Gray's poetry in the *London Review*.

armada ; at last it sails to Algiers, and disembarks its whole contents, even to the provisions of the fleet. It is beaten shamefully, loses all its stores, and has scarce bread left to last till it gets back into its own ports !

Mrs. Britannia orders her senate to proclaim America a continent of cowards, and vote it should be starved unless it will drink tea with her. She sends her only army to be besieged in one of their towns, and half her fleet to besiege the *terra firma* ; but orders her army to do nothing, in hopes that the American senate at Philadelphia will be so frightened at the British army being besieged in Boston, that it will sue for peace. At last she gives her army leave to sally out, but being twice defeated, she determines to carry on the war so vigorously till she has not a man left, that all England will be satisfied with the total loss of America ; and if everybody is satisfied, who can be blamed ? Besides, is not our dignity maintained ? have not we carried our majesty beyond all example ? When did you ever read before of a besieged army threatening military execution on the country of the besiegers ! *car tel est notre plaisir* ! But, alack ! we are like the mock doctor ; we have made the heart and the liver change sides ; *cela étoit autrefois ainsi, mais nous avons changé tout cela* !

I will certainly visit Monsr. Watelet's garden that he has curled and powdered à l'angloise. I shall like to be amused with less serious follies than our own, though I doubt I shall find they laugh a little more at us than we can at them. Well ! I will wrap myself up in my *Robinhood* ! They cannot say the good old man my father did it. Have you heard the history of Foote and her Grace of Kingston ? She applied to the Lord Chamberlain, and prevented the piece being licensed, though Foote had an audience, and with his usual modesty assured her he had not had her Grace in view. The dame, as if he had been a member of

Parliament, offered to buy him off. Aristophanes's Grecian virtue was not to be corrupted; but he offered to read the piece, and blot out whatever passages she would mark, that she thought applicable to her case. She was too cunning to bite at this; and they parted. He swears he will not only print his comedy, but act her in Lady Brumpton. He has already printed his letter to Lord Hertford, and not content with that, being asked why it was not licensed, replied, 'Why, my Lord Hertford desired me to make his youngest son a box-keeper, and because I would not, he stopped my play.' Upon my word, if the stage and the press are not checked, we shall have the army, on its return from Boston, besieged in the Haymarket itself. What are we come to, if Maids of Honour cannot marry two husbands in quiet?

Well, General Gage is recalled, and is to be hanged. We had conquered America by this time, they say, if he had not betrayed us, and desired the provincials to block him up; so *en attendant* Hancock² and Adams³, and Putnam⁴ and Washington, you may divert yourselves with executing your own General. Voltaire will abuse you, as he did about poor Byng; but really a government must condemn somebody, or the mob—but I am going to Paris, and leave you to your own devices. Don't finish your essay on gardening till I bring you the newest improvements from the Opera, where to be sure the Elysian fields will be laid out *naturally*. If anything strikes me particularly, you shall hear from me, but as my stay will be short, I don't promise, for I have been so often at Paris, that my staring is extremely *émoussé*,

² John Hancock (d. 1793), President of the Congress of Massachusetts in 1774.

³ John Adams (1735–1826), Representative of Massachusetts in the Congress of 1774; Commissioner to the court of France, 1778; first

Ambassador from the United States to Great Britain, 1785–87; President of the United States, 1797–1801.

⁴ Major-General Israel Putnam (1718–1790), commanding under Washington. He was prominent in the battle of Bunker's Hill.

and one must travel to Abyssinia, to find anything very new. Adieu!

Yours entirely,
H. W.

1635. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9, 1775.

WELL! I am going *tout de bon*, and heartily wish I was returned. It is a horrid exchange, the cleanness and verdure and tranquillity of Strawberry, for a beastly ship, worse inns, the *pavé* of the roads bordered with eternal rows of maimed trees, and the racket of an *hôtel garni*! I never dote on the months of August and September, enlivened by nothing but Lady Greenwich's speaking-trumpet—but I do not want to be amused—at least never at the expense of being put in motion. Madame du Deffand, I am sure, may be satisfied with the sacrifice I make to her!

You have heard, to be sure, of the war between your brother and Foote; but probably not how far the latter has carried his impudence. Being asked why Lord Hertford had refused to license his piece, he replied, 'Why, he asked me to make his youngest son a box-keeper, and because I would not, he stopped my play.' The Duchess of Kingston offered to buy it off, but Foote would not take her money, and swears he will act her in Lady Brumpton; which to be sure is very applicable.

I am sorry to hear Lord Villiers is going to drag my Lady through all the vile inns in Germany. I think he might go alone.

George Onslow told me yesterday, that the American Congress had sent terms of accommodation, and that your brother told him so; but a strange fatality attends George's news, which is rarely canonical; and I doubt this intelli-

gence is far from being so. I shall know more to-morrow, when I go to town to prepare for my journey on Tuesday. Pray let me hear from you, enclosed to M. Panchaud.

I accept with great joy Lady Aylesbury's offer of coming hither in October, which will increase my joy in being at home again. I intend to set out on my return the 25th of next month.

Sir Gregory Page¹ has left Lord Howe eight thousand pounds at present, and twelve more after his aunt Mrs. Page's death.

Tuesday, 10th.

I cannot find any grounds for believing that any proposals are come from the Congress. On the contrary, everything looks as melancholy as possible. Adieu !

1636. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 10, 1775.

IF I am become mysterious, Madam, I must be grown as old as Methusaleh, or by keeping bad company have contracted habits of circumspection, which I always despised.

Is it mystery not to notify royal pregnancies ? Consider how *bourgeois* it would be in me to talk of her Highness my niece ; there is the source of my reserve. Oh, but a babe of Brunswick to be born at Rome ! what an event ! very well, Madam, it will be time enough six months hence to talk of that. For my escape, and the valour of my servant, it is a mystery still to myself. I believe a man did intend to rob me one morning as I went to Hanworth, because when I ordered my footman to produce a blunderbuss that was under the seat of the chaise, the fellow galloped off ; but if David is intituled in any part in this

LETTER 1635.—¹ Sir Gregory Page, Kent. Mrs. Page was his sister-in-law, second Baronet, of Wrinklemarsh, in

history that I have suppressed, it is for being such a fool as to bid the man follow the chaise when he inquired the way. The whole conduct was my own in this no adventure, which I see has swelled to a magnitude. I had forgotten it, and it certainly was not worth relating; so pray, your Ladyship, let me be restored to my character of indiscreet in your good opinion, or my neighbour Mr. Ellis will come and trust me with some state secret out of the Utrecht Gazette. I have escaped many such sage friends by not reverencing mystery, to the prejudice of my preference, no doubt; but I do not regret my misfortune, though my error is so evident. When Mentor and Sir Richard Lyttelton were lads of fifteen, they were walking in the garden at Hampton Court, with that old driveller Lord Fitzwater. Lyttelton rattled away as usual. As soon as the peer was gone, Master Mentor said to his companion, 'Dick, how could you talk so imprudently before a privy councillor!' Could such premature wisdom fail to produce a nurse of future Cæsars? and have not I now proved to your Ladyship that you accuse me unjustly of being too cautious?

Apropos, Telemachus¹ was entertained yesterday at Oatlands; the guests besides were Lord and Lady Holderness, Lord and Lady Hertford, Fitzroy, George Onslow and his wife. It is pity the first glimpse of empire was such a paradise; he will conclude it is Elysium from thence to the Orkneys.

Methinks I in my turn might complain of reserve. *Only two bobbins of gold for your tambour, and I had rather be excused more commissions.* I beg you will honour me with any you please; I will not excuse myself, unless they would involve me in a dispute with a Custom House officer at Dover, and applications afterwards, which I have not spirit

LETTER 1636.—¹ The Prince of Wales.

to encounter. I propose being at home the first week in October. Mr. Crawford and *his lady and family*, the papers say, are set out for Spa. Lord and Lady Villiers are going to Vienna, not terrified by the persecutions which were executed on an unhappy princess² who twice took the same journey.

As your Ladyship was scandalized with the verses, though I assure you I gave copies to two Countesses, who desired to have them, I will now transcribe a more serious tale, which I found the other night in Froissart, and which shows how true gallantry is degenerated. He is speaking of Edward III's first expedition to France (I wish I could write the black letter). 'They had with them Yonge Bachelars, who had eche of them one of their eyen closed with a peace of sylke. It was sayd, how they had made a vowe among the ladyes of their countrey, that they wolde nat se but with one eye tyll they had done some dedes of armes in Fraunce.' Is not it plain, Madam, that we were greater heroes when we were in love and hoodwinked, than now that we have no sentiment, and have our eyes broad open?

Arlington Street, Aug. 11, 1775³.

Mr. and *Mrs.* Crawford are not yet gone. Have you heard that Mrs. St. Jack⁴ has declared that if the Colonel goes to America, she will accompany him? G. Selwyn says she will make an excellent *breastwork*. Adieu, Madam! I wish you much pleasure, shooting, gold cups, judges, and all the joys the country can afford.

² Lady Mary Coke.

³ Hitherto printed as a separate letter.

⁴ Barbara, daughter of Colonel

Thomas Bladen; m. (1771) Colonel (afterwards General) Hon. Henry St. John, second son of second Viscount St. John.

1637. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

From t'other side of the water, Aug. 17, 1775.

INTERPRETING your Ladyship's orders in the most personal sense, as respecting the dangers of the sea, I write the instant I am landed. I did not, in truth, set out till yesterday morning at eight o'clock; but finding the roads, horses, postillions, tides, winds, moons, and Captain Fectors in the pleasantest humour in the world, I embarked almost as soon as I arrived at Dover, and reached Calais before the sun was awake;—and here I am for the sixth time in my life, with only the trifling distance of seven-and-thirty years between my first voyage and the present. Well! I can only say in excuse, that I am got into the land of Strulbrugs, where one is never too old to be young, and where *la béquille du père Barnabas* blossoms like Aaron's rod, or the Glastonbury thorn.

Now, to be sure, I shall be a little mortified, if your Ladyship wanted a letter of news, and did not at all trouble your head about my navigation. However, you will not tell one so; and therefore I will persist in believing that this good news will be received with transport at Park Place, and that the bells of Henley will be set a-ringing. The rest of my adventures must be deferred till they have happened, which is not always the case of travels. I send you no compliments from Paris, because I have not got thither, nor delivered the bundle which Mr. Conway sent me. I did, as your Ladyship commanded, buy three pretty little medallions in frames of filigraine, for our dear old friend¹. They will not ruin you, having cost not a guinea and a half; but it was all I could find that was genteel and portable; and as she does not measure by guineas, but

LETTER 1637.—¹ Madame du Deffand. *Walpole*.

attentions, she will be as much pleased as if you had sent her a dozen acres of Park Place. As they are in bas-relief, too, they are feelable, and that is a material circumstance to her. I wish the *Diomedé* had even so much as a pair of Nankin!

Adieu, toute la chère famille! I think of October with much satisfaction; it will double the pleasure of my return.

1638. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Roye, Aug. 18, 1775.

THE last paragraph of your letter made me smile, Madam. If Colonel Mars were setting out for America with Jove's own thunder-bolt in his portmanteau, Venus could not have encouraged him by a more inspiring epistle. So my glory is to redound to your Ladyship! Alas! I am grieved to the heart that my journey has been hitherto so tranquil and obscure, that, I doubt, not the reflection of a ray will fall to your Ladyship's share. I slipped into Calais with as little *éclat* as a smuggler. No garrison under arms received me, nor commandant conducted me in ceremony to the citadel. In short, the King of France had forgotten to write a post-script in my favour, when he ordered royal honours for my niece¹; and so, by that neglect, no regard was paid to my avuncular dignity. I was not very sorry, as walking is not one of my excellences; in my best days Mr. Winnington said I tripped like a peewit; and if I do not flatter myself, my march at present is more like a dabchick's.

I arrived at Dover in such a clear blue evening, and saw the French coast so distinctly, that, had I had but a pair of miracle-shoes, I thought I could have gone over on foot in a quarter of an hour; but I am not going to relate my journey, which was written seven-and-thirty years ago, and

LETTER 1638.—¹ The Duchess of Gloucester.

is in print (v. Gray's letters). Well! I have not lived so long for nothing; I have at least learnt wit enough not to waste six days between Calais and Paris; but, as Mr. Mason says, I was young and giddy, and thought I had time enough and to spare, which is not quite the case at present. I hope my own biographer will give as good a reason for my being here at all; but that is his business, not mine.

1639. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Paris, Aug. 20, 1775.

I HAVE been sea-sick to death; I have been poisoned by dirt and vermin; I have been stifled by heat, choked by dust, and starved for want of anything I could touch: and yet, Madam, here I am, perfectly well, not in the least fatigued; and, thanks to the rivelled parchments, formerly faces, which I have seen by hundreds, I find myself almost as young as when I came hither first in the last century. In spite of my whims, and delicacy, and laziness, none of my grievances have been mortal: I have borne them as well as if I had set up for a philosopher, like the sages of this town. Indeed, I have found my dear old woman so well, and looking so much better than she did four years ago, that I am transported with pleasure, and thank your Ladyship and Mr. Conway for driving me hither. Madame du Deffand came to me the instant I arrived, and sat by me whilst I stripped and dressed myself; for, as she said, since she cannot see, there was no harm in my being stark. She was charmed with your present; but was so kind as to be so much more charmed with my arrival, that she did not think of it a moment. I sat with her till half an hour after two in the morning, and had a letter from her before my eyes were open again. In short, her soul is immortal, and forces her body to bear it company.

This is the very eve of Madame Clotilde's wedding; but Monsieur Turgot, to the great grief of Lady Mary¹, will suffer no cost, but one banquet, one ball, and a play at Versailles. Count Virri gives a banquet, a *bal masqué*, and a firework. I think I shall see little but the last, from which I will send your Ladyship a rocket in my next letter. Lady Mary, I believe, has had a private audience of the ambassador's leg, but *en tout bien et honneur*, and only to satisfy her ceremonious curiosity about any part of royal nudity. I am just going to her, as she is at Versailles; and I have not time to add a word more to the vows of your Ladyship's

Most faithful,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1640. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Paris, Aug. 23.

I SHOULD have a heart of adamant, Madam, if I was not become a perfect Frenchman. Nothing could exceed my reception. I do not talk only of my dear old friend, whose kindness augments with the century. The Maréchaux de Luxembourg and Mirepoix came to Paris to see me; the Duchesse de la Vallière met me in the outward room and embraced me. I am smeared with red, like my own crest the Saracen, and, in short, have been so kissed on both cheeks, that had they been as large as Madame de Virri's, they would have lost leather; but enough of vanity. I have landed on the moment of pomp and diversion. Madame Clotilde was married on Monday morning, and at night was the *banquet royal*,—the finest sight *sur la terre*,—I believe, for I did not see it. I husband my pleasures and my person, and do not expose my wrinkles *au grand jour*.

LETTER 1639.—¹ Lady Mary Coke.

Last night I did limp to the *bal paré*, and as I am the hare with many real friends, was placed on the *banc des ambassadeurs*, just behind the royal family. It was in the theatre, the bravest in the universe; and yet taste predominates over expense. What I have to say I can tell your Ladyship in a word, for it was impossible to see anything but the Queen! Hebes and Floras, and Helens and Graces, are street-walkers to her. She is a statue of beauty, when standing or sitting; grace itself when she moves. She was dressed in silver, scattered over with *laurier-roses*; few diamonds, and feathers, much lower than the Monument. They say she does not dance in time, but then it is wrong to dance in time. Four years ago I thought her like an English Duchess¹, whose name I have forgotten *for some years*. Horrible! but the Queen has had the cestus since. The King's likeness to a Duke, whose name is equally out of my books, remains; and as if there was a fatality that chained the two families together, Madame is as like Lady Georgiana² as two peas. As your Ladyship and Lord Ossory cannot be so engrossed with gazing on the Queen as I was, you will want to hear more of the court. I will try what I can remember of it. The new Princess of Piedmont has a glorious face, the rest about the dimensions of the last Lord Holland, which does not do so well in a stiff-bodied gown. Madame Elizabeth³ is pretty and genteel; Mademoiselle⁴ a good figure and dances well. As several of the royal family are

LETTER 1640.—¹ Elizabeth Wrottesley, Duchess of Grafton. See letter to the Earl of Hardwicke of Jan. 12, 1775. Walpole's correspondent, the Countess of Ossory, had been Duchess of Grafton previous to her divorce in 1769.

² Lady Georgiana Fitzroy, daughter of Lady Ossory by her former husband.

³ Elisabeth Philippine Marie Thérèse (1764–1794), younger sister of Louis XVI. She was imprisoned with the King and Queen in the Temple, and perished by the guillotine on May 10, 1794.

⁴ Perhaps Louise Adelaïde, daughter of the Prince de Condé; Abbess of Remiremont, 1786; d. 1824.

*drapés*⁵ for the Princess of Conti⁶, there were besides, only the King's two brothers, the three elder Mesdames⁷, the Princess de Lamballe⁸, and the Prince of Condé. Monsieur is very handsome; the Comte d'Artois a better figure and better dancer. The characters approach to those of two other royal dukes.

There were but eight minuets, and, except the Queen and Princesses, only eight lady dancers. I was not so struck with the dancing as I expected, except with a *pas de deux* by the Marquis de Noailles⁹ and Madame Holstein. For beauty, I saw none, or the Queen effaced all the rest. After the minuets were French country dances, much encumbered by the long trains, longer tresses, and hoops. As the weather was excessively sultry, I do not think the clothes, though of gauze and the lightest silks, had much taste. In the intervals of dancing, baskets of peaches, China oranges (a little out of season), biscuits, ices, and wine and water, were presented to the royal family and dancers. The ball lasted but just two hours. The monarch did not dance, but for the first two rounds of the minuets even the Queen does not turn her back to him; yet her behaviour is as easy as divine. To-night is a banquet for three hundred persons, given by the Count de Virri, and on Friday he gives a *bal masqué* to the universe in a Colisée erected on purpose. I have excused myself from the first,

⁵ A form of court mourning which consisted in draping the carriages of members of the royal family, and those who possessed *les honneurs du Louvre*, with black cloth.

⁶ Louise Elisabeth, daughter of the Prince de Condé; m. (1713) Louis Armand de Bourbon, Prince de Conti.

⁷ Daughters of Louis XV.

⁸ Marie Thérèse Louise de Savoie-Carignan (1748-1792), m. (1767) the Prince de Lamballe (eldest son of

the Duc de Penthièvre, whom he predeceased). She was Superintendent of the Queen's Household. She was greatly attached to Marie Antoinette, and shared her captivity in the Temple from Aug.-Sept. 1792. In the latter month the Princess was taken to the prison of La Force, where she was massacred on Sept. 3, 1792.

⁹ Emmanuel Marie Louis (1743-1822), Marquis de Noailles, Ambassador in England, 1776.

as I have no curiosity to see how three hundred persons eat, but shall go for a moment to the other *fête*, as nothing but dominos are used, except the grand habit for the dancers. On Saturday is to be acted, in the same great theatre at Versailles, the *Connétable de Bourbon*, a new piece by Monsieur Guibert¹⁰, author of the *Tactique*, graciously indulged to the Queen, and not to be profaned but there and at Fontainebleau, *car cela dérogeroit*; and, besides, his father is a *vieux militaire*, who would not condescend to hear his son's play read, even to the Queen! The Prince de Beauvau is to place me, and there end the spectacles, for Monsieur Turgot is *économé*.

I am rejoiced, for the heat was so great last night, and I traversed so many corridors, that I would not have so much pleasure often for all the world. Thus, Madam, I have given your Ladyship a full account of my travels in this my second life; and you are relieved by my letters from England. I cannot help telling you the French are a little amazed at our sacrificing the substance of America to the sovereignty, for they grow as English in their ideas as we grow French. Well, I will go read our papers, that I may be able to dispute with them.

1641. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Paris, Sept. 6, 1775.

I HAVE made very little progress yet towards the account I am to give you of the propagation of the faith in this kingdom. But stay, this is a little too metaphoric; and lest I should be taken for an ex-Jesuit or a spy, I declare, like the writer of an Opera, that I neither believe in the

¹⁰ Jacques Antoine Hippolyte (1743-1790), Comte de Guibert, elected a member of the French

Academy in 1786. His father was Charles Bénéoit (1715-1786), Comte de Guibert.

gods of old Rome nor new, excepting Vertumnus, Flora, and Pomona, and that I am going to write to you my Provincial, on the conversion of the French to English gardening. I have begun my observation as methodically as if I was to draw up an article for the *Encyclopedia*. I have laid the axe to the root of the tree, for I have begun by visiting M. Watelet's isle, called *le Moulin Joli*. If he has laid the axe to the root, and even to the branches, he has used it nowhere else. Instead of finding, as I expected, a windmill made of ivory and inlaid with false stones; instead of Dryads and Hamadryads gathering acorns in baskets of gauze, M. Watelet has jumped back into nature, when she was not above five hundred years old: in one word, his *island* differs in nothing from a French garden into which no mortal has set his foot for the last century. It is an *ate* (I don't know whether I spell well) joined to his *terra firma* by two bridges, one of which he calls Dutch and the other Chinese, and which are as unlike either as two peas, and which is pierced and divided into straight narrow walks (*en berceau*) and surrounded by a rude path quite round. To give this *étoile* an air *champêtre*, a plenary indulgence has been granted to every nettle, thistle, and bramble *that grew in the garden*, 'and they seem good in his sight.' The receipt is as follows:—take an *ate* full of willows, cram it full of small elms and poplar pines, strip them into cradles, and cut them into paths, and leave all the rest as rough as you found it, and you will have a *Moulin Joli*.

You must know this effort of genius is the more provoking, as the situation is charming. Besides that the isle is in the middle of the Seine, every peephole (though so small that you seem to look through the diminishing end of a spying-glass, besides terminating on one real windmill) is bounded by a *château*, a *clocher*, a village, a convent,

a villa where Henrietta Maria was educated, or hermitage to which Bossuet retired,—not to mortify himself, but Fénelon. It is true, you catch these points of view over wide fields of chalk, which would produce frankincense as soon as grass, and which (if they had symptoms of verdure) were waving ranks of fennel. I always perceive here, when I am out of Paris; but I never can think myself in the country. I shall next week see some more English Essays.

But they are imitating us in better things: their King is of an excellent disposition, he has driven away the Chancellor, the Duc d'Aiguillon, and those wretches who had given perfection to despotism in the last reign. M. de Maurepas restored the old Parliament, and M. Turgot, the Comptroller-General, has destroyed *corvées*, that most execrable oppression, and is every day planning and attempting acts for public happiness. The *Éloges* of the Academy roll on maxims of virtue and patriotism, and the King publicly applauds them. You may judge whether they do not stare at all we are doing! They will not believe me when I tell them that the American war is *fashionable*, for one is forced to use that word to convey to them an idea of the majority. A great lady asked me the other day if I was not a Bostonian? and I have not met with a single Frenchman who does not express indignation or sneer contempt at all our late Acts of Parliament. M. de Castries being told that Lord North has the Garter, was surprised, and said for what? for having lost America?—Upon these subjects, as I have not a vast deal to say on behalf of my dear country, I choose to shift the conversation to her Grace of Kingston, whose history seems as strange to them as our politics. What a *chef-d'œuvre* is Foote's answer¹!

LETTER 1641.—¹ See *Gent. Mag.* 1775, pp. 390-2.

Sept. 10.

Chap. II.

On Anglo-Franco gardens,

which by the by they call Anglo-Chinois gardens, as they say that by the help of Sir William Chambers's *lunettes* they have detected us for having stolen our gardens from the Chinese. I shall tell them another tale when I publish my last volume. Yesterday I went to see the Countess de Boufflers' English garden at Auteuil, and it is strictly English, and begotten by her on an English gardener. There are fifty-two acres, which ascend from the house up a hill that is laid out in fields, with a sunk fence and loose trees and shrubs, and has tolerable turf, except that it is coarse and of a green seldom worn by a gentleman's garden in England. All along the summit reigns a noble terrace, surrounded by the Bois de Boulogne, into which a *grille* opens upon a lofty avenue bounded by a sugar-loaf hill. The terrace looks over the lawn upon a glorious prospect, which begins from the left with one of the King's houses, is joined by a wood out of which juts Passy, the Duc de Penthièvre's², that forms the side-scene and flings a rich view of hills and towns to a great distance. The middle of the landscape advances again; on the foreground are villages and villas, over which is extended all Paris, with the horizon broken by the towers and domes of Notre Dame, St. Sulpice, the Invalides, the Val de Grâce, &c.; the whole height of the semicircle goes off in hills decked with villages and country-houses that are closed by Meudon, and forests on higher hills. In this sumptuous prospect nothing is wanting but verdure and water, of which you do not see a drop. In short, they can never have as beautiful landscapes as ours, till they have as bad a climate.

² Louis Jean Marie de Bourbon (1725-1793), Duc de Penthièvre.

I think I shall stay here a month longer. If you send me a line, direct it to Arlington; it will be conveyed or kept for me.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1642. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Paris, Sept. 7, 1775.

YOUR letter of Aug. 12th followed me hither from England. I can answer it from hence with less reserve than I should at home. I understand very well, my dear Sir, the propriety of the style in which you write in your ministerial capacity, and never wish to have you expose yourself to any inconvenience by unnecessary frankness. I am too much convinced of your heart and head not swerving from the glorious principles in which we were both educated, to suspect you of having adopted the principles instilled into so many Englishmen by Scotch Jacobites, the authors of the present, as they have been of every, civil war,—since the days of Queen Elizabeth. You will on your side not be surprised that I am what I always was, a zealot for liberty in every part of the globe, and consequently that I most heartily wish success to the Americans. They have hitherto not made *one* blunder; and the administration have made a thousand, besides the two capital ones, of first provoking, and then of uniting the colonies. The latter seem to have as good heads as hearts, as we want both. The campaign seems languishing. The ministers will make all their efforts against the spring. So no doubt will the Americans too. Probably the war will be long. On the side of England, it must be attended with ruin. If England prevails, English and American liberty is at an end! If the colonies prevail, our commerce is gone—and if, at last, we negotiate, they will neither forgive nor give us our former advantages.

The country where I now am is, luckily, neither in a condition or disposition to meddle. If it did, it would complete our destruction, even by only assisting the colonies, which I can scarce think they are blind enough not to do. They openly talk of our tyranny and folly with horror and contempt, and perhaps with amazement, and so does almost every foreign minister here, as well as every Frenchman. Instead of being mortified, as I generally am when my country is depreciated, I am comforted by finding that, though but one of very few in England, the sentiments of the rest of the world concur with and confirm mine. The people with us are fascinated; and what must we be, when Frenchmen are shocked at our despotic acts! Indeed, both this nation and their King seem to embrace the most generous principles—the only fashion, I doubt, in which we shall not imitate them! Too late, our eyes will open!

The Duke and Duchess¹ are at Venice. Nothing ever exceeded the distinctions paid to them in this country. The King even invited them to Paris; but the Duke's haste to be more southerly before the bad weather begins, would not permit him to accept of that honour. They do not expect the same kindness everywhere—and for the English, they have even let the French see what slaves they are, by not paying their duty to the Duke and Duchess. I have written to her, without naming you, to dissuade their fixing at Rome—I fear, in vain. I proposed Sienna to them, as I flatter myself the Emperor's goodness for the Duke would dispose the Great Duke to make it agreeable to them; and their residence there would not commit *you*. Indeed, I do not believe you suspect me of sacrificing you to the interests of my family. On the other hand, I wish you, for your own sake, to take any opportunities of paying your court to them

indirectly. They are both warm and hurt at the indignities they have received. In our present distracted situation, it is more than possible that the Duke may be a very important personage. I know well that you have had full reason to be dissatisfied with him; I remember it as much as you can: but you are too prudent, as well as too good-natured, not to forgive a young Prince. I own I am in pain about the Duchess. She has all the good qualities of her father², but all his impetuosity; and is much too apt to resent affronts, though her virtue and good nature make her as easily reconciled; but her first movements are not discreet. I wish you to please her as much as possible, within your instructions. She has admirable sense, when her passions do not predominate. In one word, her marriage has given me many a pang; and though I never gave into it, I endeavour by every gentle method to prevent her making her situation still worse; and, above all things, I try never to inflame. It is all I can do where I have no ascendant, which, with a good deal of spirit of my own, I cannot expect: however, as I perfectly understand both my parties and myself, I manage pretty well. I know when to stoop, and when to stop; and when I will stoop or will not. I should not be so pliant if they were where they ought to be.

That heroine of Doctors' Commons, about whom you inquire, the Duchess of Kingston, has at last made her folly, which I have long known, as public as her shame, by entering the lists with a Merry-Andrew, but who is no fool. Foote was bringing her on the stage: Lord Hertford³ prohibited his piece. Drunk with her triumph, she would give the mortal blow with her own hand,—

Pallas te hoc vulnere Pallas immolat;

² Sir Edward Walpole. *Walpole.*

³ Lord Chamberlain. *Walpole.*

but, as the instrument she chose was a *goose-quill*, the stroke recoiled on herself. She wrote a letter in the *Evening Post*, which not the lowest of her class, who tramp in pattens, would have set her mark to. Billingsgate from a ducal coronet was inviting: however, Foote, with all the delicacy she ought to have used, replied only with wit, irony, and confounded satire. The Pope will not be able to wash out the spots with all the holy water in the Tiber. I imagine she will escape a trial; but Foote has given her the *coup de grâce*.

Lord Chatham, when I left England, was in a very low, languishing way; his constitution, I believe, too much exhausted to throw out the gout; and then it falls on his spirits. The last letters speak of his case as not desperate. He might, if allowed—and it was practicable—do much good still. Who else can, I know not. The opposition is weak every way. They have better hearts than the ministers, fewer good heads; not that I am in admiration of the latter. Times may produce men. We must trust to the book of events, if we will flatter ourselves. Make no answer to this; only say you received my letter from Paris, and direct to England. I may stay here a month longer; but it is uncertain.

11th.

P.S. I had made up my letter; but those I received from England last night bring such important intelligence, I must add a paragraph. That miracle of gratitude, the Czarina, has consented to lend England twenty thousand Russians, to be transported to America. The Parliament is to meet on the 20th of next month, and vote twenty-six thousand seamen! What a paragraph of blood is there! With what torrents must liberty be preserved in America! In England, what can save it? Oh, mad, mad England! What frenzy, to throw away its treasures, lay waste its

empire of wealth, and sacrifice its freedom, that its prince may be the arbitrary lord of boundless deserts in America, and of an impoverished, depopulated, and thence insignificant, island in Europe! and what prospect of comfort has a true Englishman? Why, that Philip II miscarried against the boors of Holland, and that Louis XIV could not replace James II on the throne!

1643. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Paris, Sept. 8, 1775.

THE delays of the post, and its departure before its arrival, saved me some days of anxiety for Lady Aylesbury, and prevented my telling you how concerned I am for her accident; though I trust, by this time, she has not even pain left. I feel the horror you must have felt during her suffering in the dark, and on the sight of her arm¹; and though nobody admires her needlework more than I, still I am rejoiced that it will be the greatest sufferer. However, I am very impatient for a further account. Madame du Deffand, who, you know, never loves her friends by halves, and whose impatience never allows itself time to inform itself, was out of her wits, because I could not explain exactly how the accident happened, and where. She wanted to write directly, though the post was just gone; and, as soon as I could make her easy about the accident, she fell into a new distress about her fans for Madame de Marchais, and concludes they have been overturned, and broken too. In short, I never saw anything like her. She has made engagements for me till Monday se'nnight, in which are included I don't know how many journeys into the country; and as nobody ever leaves her without engaging them for

LETTER 1643.—¹ Lady Ailesbury at Park Place, and dislocated her
had been overturned in her carriage wrist. *Walpole.*

another time, all these parties will be so many polypuses, that will shoot out into new ones every way. Madame de Jonsac², a great friend of mine, arrived the day before yesterday, and Madame du Deffand has pinned her down to meeting me at her house four times before next Tuesday, all parentheses, that are not to interfere with our other suppers; and from those suppers I never get to bed before two or three o'clock. In short, I need have the activity of a squirrel, and the strength of a Hercules, to go through my labours—not to count how many *démêlés* I have had to *raccommode*, and how many *mémoires* to present against Tonton³, who grows the greater favourite the more people he devours. As I am the only person who dare correct him, I have already insisted on his being confined in the Bastille every day after five o'clock. T'other night he flew at Lady Barrymore's face, and I thought would have torn her eye out; but it ended in biting her finger. She was terrified; she fell into tears. Madame du Deffand, who has too much parts not to see everything in its true light, perceiving that she had not beaten Tonton half enough, immediately told us a story of a lady, whose dog having bitten a piece out of a gentleman's leg, the tender dame, in a great fright, cried out, 'Won't it make my dog sick?'

Lady Barrymore has taken a house. She will be glutted with conquests: I never saw anybody so much admired. I doubt her poor little head will be quite overset.

Madame de Marchais is charming: eloquence and attention itself. I cannot stir for peaches, nectarines, grapes, and Bury pears. You would think Pomona was in love with me. I am not so transported with N—— cock and hen. They are a tabor and pipe that I do not understand. He mouths and she squeaks, and neither articulates. M. d'Entragues I have

² The Comtesse de Jonsac, a niece of the Président Hénault.

³ A favourite dog of Madame du Deffand's. *Walpole*.

not seen. Upon the whole I am much more pleased with Paris than ever I was; and perhaps shall stay a little longer than I intended. The Harry Grenvilles⁴ are arrived. I dined with them at Madame de Viry's, who has completed the conquest of France by her behaviour on Madame Clotilde's wedding, and by the *fêtes* she gave. Of other English I wot not, but grieve the Richmonds do not come.

I am charmed with Dr. Bally; nay, and with the King of Prussia—as much as I can be with a northern monarch. For your Kragen, I think we ought to procure a female one, and marry it to Ireland, that we may breed some new islands against we have lost America. I know nothing of said America. There is not a Frenchman that does not think us distracted.

I used to scold you about your bad writing, and perceive I have written in such a hurry, and blotted my letter so much, that you will not be able to read it: but consider how few moments I have to myself. I am forced to stuff my ears with cotton to get any sleep.—However, my journey has done me good. I have thrown off at least fifteen years. Here is a letter for my dear Mrs. Damer from Madame de Cambis, who thinks she dotes on you all. Adieu!

P.S. I shall bring you two *Éloges* of Marshal Catinat; not because I admire them, but because I admire him, because I think him very like you.

1644. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

AVEZ-VOUS lu les deux *Éloges*? Ah! mon Dieu, le petit Cossé est mort; c'est une désolation! Monsieur de Clermont qui vient de perdre sa femme!—eh bien, Madame! et Mon-

⁴ Henry Grenville, brother to the first Earl Temple. He married Miss

Margaret Banks, a celebrated beauty. Walpole.

sieur Chamboneau qui doit reprendre la sienne—mais c'est affreux. Apropos, on dit qu'on vient de nommer deux dames à Madame Elizabeth ! si je le sçais ! bon ; ne voilà-t-il pas que je viens de me faire écrire chez Madame de Roncherolles ! soupez-vous par hasard chez Madame de la Reinière¹ ?

This is the quintessence, Madam, of the present state of Paris, Sept. 9th, 1775, a quarter before twelve in the forenoon ; and if you receive my letter within a week, you may boast of having the freshest and most fashionable intelligence of what was said last night at half an hour after eight in one of the first houses in this capital : not that your Ladyship has much claim on my punctuality : I have been here three weeks this blessed day, and you have taken no more notice of me than if I was in Siberia, and were gone out of fashion instead of in. Remember I am out of your jurisdiction, Madam ; and that *mon cœur* is assailed like *Cithère assiégée*, the subject of the present Opera. Lord ! how I could brag if I would ! Madame de B.² told me last night that I had made the *conquête* of her daughter-in-law, la Comtesse Emilie ; I am going to drink tea with her under a *bosquet de plumes* this evening, in the mother's English garden at Auteuil, and I am to sup at St. Ouen with Madame Necker³, who is reckoned to have condescended more towards me than to any *bel esprit* or *philosophe* since the days of David Hume. It is true I have hurt myself by speaking a little irreverently of Monsieur Thomas, and by laughing when she told me that Bossuet and the writers under Louis Quatorze had only opened the channels of eloquence which the authors of the present age have made into a perfect bason—but I am always kicking down the pail of my fortune by some indiscretion or other ! Well !

LETTER 1644.—¹ *Née* Jarente, wife of M. de la Reynière, a rich financier. Her suppers were celebrated.

² Madame de Boufflers.

³ *Née* Suzanne Curchod ; wife of the financier Jacques Necker ; d. 1794.

they are a charming people, and I cannot think of leaving them yet. In England I fancied I was within a furlong of threescore ; but it is so English to grow old ! The French are Strulbrugs improved. After ninety they have no more caducity or distempers, but set out on a new career. Madame du Deffand and I set out last Sunday at seven in the evening, to go fifteen miles to a ball, and came back after supper ; and another night, because it was but one in the morning when she brought me home, she ordered the coachman to make the tour of the Quais, and drive gently because it was so early.

Do you think, Madam, I will come home and have the gout, when I feel myself as young as Nestor when he had just tapped his second century ? These good folks push the delusion of life to the last moment. A gentleman here was dying ; his wife sent for the notary to make his will ; and when it was done, lest the poor man should have a codicil more of affection to make, they supped by his bedside. The notary, *tout plein d'attentions*, filled a bumper and said, 'Madame, à la santé de notre aimable agonisant.'

Pray tell Lord Ossory, Madam, that he would not know Paris, it is so improved in buildings and in good architecture. The Hôtel de la Monnaie on the Quai is very handsome. The École Militaire would be beautiful if the columns were not as short as they are long. I have not yet had time to see the École de Chirurgie, which they say is beautiful, nor the Portail de Ste. Geneviève, nor the Hôtel du Châtelet, nor the Petite Maison of the Princess of Monaco, but shall next week. There are twenty new streets that are lovely, with arcades and gardens. Mad. de Mirepoix's house, where I supped last night, is charming. It is on the old Boulevard, the trees of which shade the windows, with the perspective of a street in front. The *salle à manger* is all of stucco, highly polished, representing white marble, with panels of

verd antique. The grand cabinet is round, all white and gold and glasses, with curtains in festoons of silk *flambé*, and illuminated by four branches of lilies of *or moulu*, each as loose and graceful as that which Guido's angel holds in the Salutation at the Carmelites, which, alas! they have just repainted, as they are serving the whole cloister at the Chartreuse. While we were at supper, with all the windows open, and *les Gardes du Roi* playing to us, your Ladyship, I suppose, was hovering over a fire. It has been sultry ever since I came hither; the last five days like the torrid zone, and lightning as cheap as gunpowder.

We are expecting Mr. Crawford; pray don't send for him to Parliament. In England I conclude you are still talking of Mrs. Rudd and Miss Butterfield⁴, and of the Duchess of Rudd and Butterfield⁵. Well, you may tell me what news you have; I will pretend to care about it, as one does about *les nouvelles de province*. I am very insolent, Madam, but at bottom there is a little resentment at not having heard from you.

1645. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Paris, Sept. 12, 1775.

So they say it was I, Madam, who made your Ladyship entertain a passion for Lord Ossory! Upon my word, I never suspected before that I was the god of love! nor can I now discover any resemblance between us, unless Le Sage was right when he made the devil *upon two sticks* acknowledge himself for Cupid.

However, as the deed was a good one, and made two persons happier than Venus's son generally does, I am well content to take it upon myself: yet not proposing to be so

⁴ Jane Butterfield, tried on a charge of murder in the preceding August, and acquitted.

⁵ The Duchess of Kingston.

convenient again, I will resign Asmodeo's hop to anybody that likes the profession.

What was in the letter that diverted Lord Ossory, I remember no more than the man in the moon, whose memory lasts but a month. I know, though you are so overbenign to them, Madam, that I grow easier about my letters; since they have become so numerous, they must have the fate of a collection that was found last winter at Monsieur de Pondeveylle's: there were sixteen thousand from one lady, in a correspondence of only eleven years. For fear of setting the house on fire if thrown into the chimney, the executors crammed them into the oven. There have been known here persons who wrote to one another four times a day; and I was told of one couple, who being always together, and the lover being fond of writing, he placed a screen between them, and then wrote to Madame on t'other side, and flung them over.

You perceive I had not received your Ladyship's when I sent one away yesterday, nor knew you had been dancing a dream with the Duke of Monmouth, who, when he lost his head, never dreamt you would replace it with his cousin's, whose head I am sure I never recommended or commended to anybody.

Sept. 16¹.

I was interrupted, Madam, t'other day, and have not had a moment since to finish my answer, for, as I never come home till morning, I do not rise till evening. Mr. Crawford is arrived, *though* he did promise to come—to make amends, he has not kept one engagement since. On his way, he went to visit the Châtelets, but in a province where they do not live; he has changed his lodgings already, and does not like that which he has got. When he came to Brussels, Sir Something Gordon, our minister, had just shot out both

LETTER 1645.—¹ Hitherto printed as a separate letter.

eyes of the Duc d'Arenberg's son, but letters since say he will recover one of them.

Pray assure the Duchess of Marlborough, Madam, that I am much flattered by her Grace's invitation, and shall certainly obey it. I shall not have an opportunity quite so soon as I intended, having promised to stay here till the 10th of next month—a promise I already repent, as the weather, with English inconstancy, has changed at once from sultry to extreme cold and deluges of rain.

The charming Queen is gone out of fashion, so I am no longer in love with her. However, as I have not seen another face that is handsomer than a mermaid's at the stern of a ship, my heart is still vacant—in France; and you may have it again, Madam, if you are not still dreaming of the Duke of Monmouth, or any of King Charles's breed. If you saw how like this King is to one of them, and what horrid grimaces he makes, I am sure *all my power of description* would not reconcile you to him. Monsieur is very handsome—but somehow or other, I doubt, nobody will fall in love with him. The Comte d'Artois is not so comely, is better made, and having revived the house of Bourbon, is taking true pains to reconcile the ladies to the family. The Duke of Orléans, as they have no longer occasion for his being king, is in a bad way. Madame de Boufflers told us *at supper* t'other night *qu'à sa garde-robe il s'étoit passé de la graisse*. I never heard of such a complaint before, and was very glad it was the only one that poor Crawford, who was present, cannot fancy he has.

Lady Anne's comparison of her father to Maître Corbeau put me in mind of a very good story, though so old I fear you know it, of a little girl who had confounded her prayers and La Fontaine, and being ordered to repeat the Lord's Prayer in French, began, 'Notre père sur un arbre perché.' If this is antiquated, I have nothing else newer—except that

I am violently tempted to stay for Mariette's sale, which they say is to be in November. I have not heard a syllable of news from England since I came hither, my few correspondents being in the country, like your Ladyship.

Thank my stars, you cannot commend this letter, Madam : I hope it is dull enough to pass with impunity. I should have a fine time of it if I tortured myself to keep up a character ! but nobody shall ever catch me at that.

21st.

Lord Duncannon² is not gone ! my letter has lain by till it is mouldy, but as I have an opportunity of sending it to-morrow, and no time to write another, it must go, superannuated as it is !

1646. TO GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN.

Paris, Sept. 16, 1775.

MR. BRODRICK¹ brought me your letter yesterday, and I told him, as you may be sure, how glad I shall be to be of any use to him. I shall be of little, I believe, as his object is to see things, not persons.

Madame du Deffand would have been more pleased with your message, which I delivered immediately, if she had had greater faith in it : yet, when Crawford and I come so often, how can she doubt her power of attraction ? If possible, she is more worth visiting than ever : and so far am I from being ashamed of coming hither at my age, that I look on myself as wiser than one of the Magi, when I travel to adore this star in the East. The star and I went to the Opera last night, and when we came from Madame

² Frederick Ponsonby (1758-1844), Lord Duncannon, eldest son of second Earl of Besborough, whom he succeeded in 1793.

LETTER 1646.—Collated with copy of original in possession of Mr. E. S.

Roscoe.

¹ Probably a son of the third Viscount Midleton, who married George Selwyn's niece, Albinia Townshend.

de la Vallière's, at one in the morning, it wanted to drive about the town, because it was too early to *set*. To be sure, you and I have dedicated our decline to very different occupations. You nurse a little girl² of four years old, and I rake with an old woman of fourscore! *N'importe*; we know many sages that take great pains to pass their time with less satisfaction.

We have both one capital mortification; have not you? That a great-grand-daughter of Madame de Sévigné pretends, for it is not certain, that she has been debauched by ancient Richelieu, and half the world thinks that she is more guilty of forgery. The memoirs of the two parties are half as voluminous as Monsieur de Guines', and more are to appear.

You shall have some royal prints. New fashions in dress, furniture, baubles, I have seen none. Feathers are waning, and almost confined to *filles* and foreigners. I found out an Englishwoman at the Opera last night by her being covered with plumes and no rouge, which made her look like a whore in a salivation; so well our countrywomen contrive to display their virtue!

I do not tell you about Mons. Turgot's regulations and reformatations, because you care no more about their *patrie* than your own; but you shall hear a *bon mot* of Madame du Deffand. Mons. Turgot has begun several reforms and retracted them: she said, 'Dans le bon vieux tems on reculoit pour mieux sauter, au lieu que Mons. Turgot saute pour mieux reculer.'

Of the house of Harrington I know as much as you do. Lady Barrymore is here, and my Lord and Lady Harriet are coming: the first is excessively admired. Lady Mary Coke, Harry Grenville and his wife, Crawford, Lord Coleraine³, and Lord Duncannon are here: the latter will carry

² Maria Fagniani, subsequently mentioned as 'Mimy.'

³ John Hanger (1743-1794), second Baron Coleraine.

this letter. There are many other English; but I did not come hither to get acquaintance of that sort. Madame du Deffand has recruited her vacancies, and given me enough new French. With one of them you would be delighted, a Madame de Marchais. She is not perfectly young, has a face like a Jew pedlar, her person is about four feet, her head about six, and her *coiffure* about ten. Her forehead, chin, and neck are whiter than a miller's; and she wears more festoons of natural flowers than all the *figurantes* at the Opera. Her eloquence is still more abundant, her *attentions* exuberant. She talks volumes, writes folios—I mean in *billets*; presides over the *Académie*, inspires passions, and has not time enough to heal a quarter of the wounds she gives. She has a house in a nut-shell, that is fuller of inventions than a fairy tale; her bed stands in the middle of the room, because there is no other space that would hold it; and is surrounded by such a perspective of looking-glasses, that you may see all that passes in it from the first antechamber. But you will see her if you come in spring, which you will not do unless you bring Mimy and Raton, and one or two of Lord Carlisle's children⁴; and that you will be afraid of doing, for Madame du Deffand has got a favourite dog that will bite all their noses off, and was very near tearing out one of Lady Barrymore's eyes t'other night. Adieu! I shall see you by the middle of October.

21st. Duncannon is not gone, but I can send my letter to-morrow, and shall.

1647. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Paris, Oct. 3, 1775.

You may be cutting down palm-branches, Madam, to strew the way, for I am coming. The tempter took me up

⁴ Selwyn was much attached to the Earl of Carlisle and his family.

into a mountain, and showed me all Mariette's collection of prints and drawings, which are to be sold in November, and offered me my choice of them if I would stay. I resisted, and prefer myself infinitely to Scipio: he might have had fifty other women; but where is there another room full of Raphaels, Correggios, Parmegianos, and Michael Angelos? Besides, virtue was the *bon ton* in all the *ruelles* in Rome, and it was not *sçavoir vivre* to feel like a man: my continence is unique; who else curbs any passion or withstands any temptation? Did not three monarchs jump at Poland the moment the devil gave them a glimpse of it? Did I learn self-denial *chez nous*? but I will be just, and own that perhaps I have been infected here. *C'est le règne de la vertu*; and I am flying, lest I should be thought Frenchified, if I return with any principles. Messieurs de Turgot and Malesherbes¹ are every day framing plans for mitigating monarchy and relieving the people; and the King not only listens to but encourages them. Their *philosophes* tell folks that the age is enlightened; but don't repeat this, Madam; I should be laughed at in England, where we are wiser, and have adopted all the notions which the French are so silly as to relinquish.

However, things do not seem fixed here; there are two parties, if either of which prevailed, Dame Vertu would return to her rags. The charming Queen is eager to reinstate Mons. de Choiseul, and then Madame Gloire would blaze out in full *éclat*. If Monsieur and Madame (the latter a very artful Italian²) get the ascendant, then the Princess de Marsan (Monsieur's governess) would bring back the Jesuits, persecution, the Church, and the devil knows what—

LETTER 1647.—¹ Chrétien Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes (1721–1794); Ministre de la Maison du Roi, 1775–76. He was again minister in 1787, but resigned in 1788, and lived in retirement until

1792, when he undertook the defence of Louis XVI at his trial before the Convention. He was guillotined in April 1794.

² She was of the house of Savoy.

everything but a Madame du Barri, who must wait for the reign of the Comte d'Artois, till when there will be no naughty doings in this country.

I am going to-night to the Italian comedy with Madame de Mirepoix, to see a new piece, called *La Réduction de Paris*. I have no idea what it is to be, but shall have time to tell you before I finish my letter. My dear old woman has been dangerously ill, which has confined me above ten days. I carried her yesterday to the new Boulevard to take the air for the first time, and with much difficulty have persuaded her not to sup in the country to-night.

Poor Mr. Crawford is laid up with the gout, but will not be so long, for in spite of all my wisdom he has sent for a fashionable empiric, who has clapped a plaster to his foot and removed the pain in one night. He consulted an old Duc de Brancas, who was a cripple, and assured him he could already dance a minuet. As I do not want to dance one, I shall not have recourse to the quack, though he should not kill Crawford. In truth he is, and always will be, so unhappy a being, that if I did not love him as much as I do, I should scarce think it kind to dissuade him from anything; but he has so much real worth, and so much good sense, that I preach to him by the hour, though I expect no fruit from my sermons. Madame du Deffand says one can be but what one is born: a great affront to me, who pretend to have improved myself exceedingly. She obeys her thesis so well, that she still says and does everything that comes into her head; and though I have lectured her black and blue about whispering to me in company, it is but two nights ago that she whispered the Bishop of Mirepoix, thinking it was I that sat next to her, about a lady in company, who was sitting over against her, and saw the mistake. You will not believe it perhaps, Madam, but here I am thought a miracle of prudence and discretion. Yes,

you will ; for I recollect your Ladyship sometimes upbraids me with those qualities. If I have them, I am sure I am not what I was born ; but evil communication corrects *bad* manners.

Now I am quoting holy writ, I will tell you a story from Madame du Deffand. A worthy old gentleman, who was ill, made his footman read the Bible to him. Unluckily the man could not read, at least not well. The first sentence he uttered was, 'Dieu apparut à Abimelech en singe.'— 'Comment donc, butor ! que lis-tu là ?'— 'Mais, Monsieur, je dis que Dieu apparut à Abimelech en singe.'— 'Dieu apparut en singe !'— 'Eh bien ! Oui, Monsieur, est-ce que Dieu ne peut pas prendre telle forme qu'il lui plaît ?' Pray, Madam, make Lady Anne observe, how true piety drew edification from the mouth of the poor footman.

I have another very moral tale for Lady Anne, but it is too long for a letter. I hope to find her in danger of a brother. You know I am so angry at her sister, that I don't even know her name, and regard her as a footman did here, who being sent to inquire after a lady that was brought to bed, and being asked at his return what the child was, said, 'Je ne sçais pas ; je sçais que ce n'est pas un garçon.'

P.S. Huge news!—yet not quite ripe. Monsieur de Choiseul is come suddenly to Paris. They say he goes back on Saturday, but his friends look in great spirits ; and as the Queen has lately committed some acts of authority, and as Madame de Marsan has retired without a pension, the family-compact— But perhaps your Ladyship had rather hear about *La Réduction de Paris*. It is a comic opera, and yet as dismal as *George Barnwell*. Henry IV does nothing but utter maxims and sentences : in the first scene arrives a dame with a helmet on, a spear and shield,

and one leg bare. I concluded it was Joan of Arc, but it proved to be a Dame de Châtillon, who sings a catch to persuade his Majesty to put every living soul to the sword, as *le brave* La Noue does another about *la loi fondamentale*. In short, the nation has jumbled itself into such a hodge-podge of philosophy, which they set to music, and of eloquence, which they dress with all sauces, that their productions are monsters of pedantry. I have not met with a page that is worth bringing you. The Academy of Marseilles have given for their next subject the *Éloge* of Madame de Sévigné. How the good soul would stare if she knew it! Adieu, Madam, and adieu, Paris!

1648. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Paris, Oct. 6, 1775.

It will look like a month since I wrote to you; but I have been coming, and am. Madame du Deffand has been so ill, that the day she was seized I thought she would not live till night. Her herculean weakness, which could not resist strawberries and cream after supper, has surmounted all the *ups* and *downs* which followed her excess; but her impatience to go everywhere and to do everything has been attended with a kind of relapse, and another kind of giddiness; so that I am not quite easy about her, as they allow her to take no nourishment to recruit, and she will die of inanition, if she does not live upon it. She cannot lift her head from the pillow without *étourdissemens*; and yet her spirits gallop faster than anybody's, and so do her repartees. She has a great supper to-night for the Duc de Choiseul, and was in such a passion yesterday with her cook about it, and that put Tonton into such a rage, that *nos dames de Saint-Joseph* thought the devil or the philosophers were flying away with their convent!

As I have scarce quitted her, I can have had nothing to tell you. If she gets well, as I trust, I shall set out on the 12th; but I cannot leave her in any danger—though I shall run many myself, if I stay longer. I have kept such bad hours with this *malade*, that I have had alarms of gout; and bad weather, worse inns, and a voyage in winter, will ill suit me. The fans arrived at a propitious moment, and she immediately had them opened on her bed, and felt all the patterns, and had all the papers described. She was all satisfaction and thanks, and swore me to do her full justice to Lady Aylesbury and Mrs. Damer. Lord Harrington and Lady Harriet are arrived; but have announced and persisted in a strict invisibility.

I know nothing of my *chère patrie*, but what I learn from the *London Chronicle*; and that tells me, that the trading towns are suing out *lettres de noblesse*, that is, entreating the King to put an end to commerce, that they may all be gentlemen. Here agriculture, economy, reformation, philosophy, are the *bon ton* even at court. The two nations seem to have crossed over and figured in; but as people that copy take the bad with the good, as well as the good with the bad, there was two days ago a great horse-race in the Plain de Sablon, between the Comte d'Artois, the Duc de Chartres, Monsieur de Conflans, and the Duc de Lauzun. The latter won by the address of a little English postillion, who is in such fashion that I don't know whether the Academy will not give him for the subject of an *éloge*.

The Duc de Choiseul, I said, is here; and, as he has a second time put off his departure, *cela fait beaucoup de bruit*. I shall not be at all surprised if he resumes the reins, as (forgive me a pun) he has the *Reine* already. Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes certainly totter—but I shall tell you no more till I see you; for though this

goes by a private hand, it is so private, that I don't know it, being an English merchant's, who lodges in this hotel, and whom I do not know by sight: so, perhaps, I may bring you word of this letter myself. I flatter myself Lady Aylesbury's arm has recovered its straightness and its cunning.

Madame du Deffand says I love you better than anything in the world. If true, I hope you have not less penetration: if you have not, or it is not true, what would professions avail?—So I leave that matter in suspense. Adieu!

Oct. 7.

Madame du Deffand was quite well yesterday; and at near one this morning I left the Duc de Choiseul, the Duchesse de Grammont, the Prince and Princess of Beauvau, Princess of Poix¹, the Maréchale de Luxembourg, Duchesse de Lauzun, Ducs de Gontaut² et de Chabot³, and Caraccioli, round her *chaise longue*; and she herself was not a dumb personage. I have not heard yet how she has slept, and must send away my letter this moment, as I must dress to go to dinner with Monsieur de Malesherbes at Madame de Villegagnon's. I must repose a great while after all this living in company; nay, intend to go very little into the world again, as I do not admire the French way of burning one's candle to the very snuff in public. Tell Mrs. Damer that the fashion now is to erect the *toupée* into a high detached tuft of hair, like a cockatoo's crest; and this *toupée* they call *la physionomie*—I don't guess why.

LETTER 1648. — ¹ Anne Louise Marie de Beauvau, daughter of the Prince de Craon; m. (1767) Philippe Louis Marie Antoine de Noailles, Prince de Poix, son of the Maréchal de Noailles.

² Charles Antoine Armand de

Gontaut, Duc de Gontaut, Lieutenant-General and Governor of Languedoc.

³ Probably Louis Marie Bretagne Dominique de Rohan-Chabot (1710–1801), Duc de Rohan.

My *laquais* is come back from St. Joseph's, and says Marie de Vichy⁴ has had a very good night, and is quite well.—Philip⁵! let my chaise be ready on Thursday.

1649. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Paris, Oct. 10, 1775.

I AM still here, though on the wing. Your answer to mine from hence was sent back to me from England; as I have loitered here beyond my intention; in truth, from an indisposition of mind. I am not impatient to be in a frantic country, that is stabbing itself in every vein. The delirium still lasts; though, I believe, kept up by the quacks that caused it. Is it credible that five or six of the great *trading* towns have presented addresses against the Americans? I have no doubt but those addresses are procured by those boobies the country gentlemen, their members, and bought of the aldermen; but is it not amazing that the merchants and manufacturers do not duck such tools in a horse-pond? When the storm will recoil I do not know, but it will be terrible in all probability, though too late. Never shall we be again what we have been! Other powers, who sit still, and wisely suffer us to plunge over head and ears, will perhaps be alarmed at what they write from England, that we are to buy twenty thousand Russian assassins, at the price of Georgia: how deep must be our game, when we pursue it at the expense of establishing a new maritime power, and aggrandize that engrossing throne, which threatens half Europe, for the satisfaction of enslaving our own brethren! Horrible policy! If the Americans, as our papers say, are on the point of seizing Canada, I should think that France would not long remain

⁴ The maiden name of Madame du Deffand. *Walpole*.

⁵ Mr. Walpole's *valet de chambre*. *Walpole*.

neuter, when she may regain her fur trade with the Canadians, or obtain Canada from the Americans: but it is endless to calculate what we may lose. Our court has staked everything against despotism; and the nation, which must be a loser, whichever side prevails, takes part against the Americans, who fight for the nation as well as for themselves! What Egyptian darkness!

This country is far more happy. It is governed by benevolent and beneficent men, under a prince who has not yet betrayed a fault, and who will be as happy as his people if he always employs such men. Messieurs de Turgot and Malesherbes are philosophers in the true sense, that is, legislators; but, as their plans tend to serve the public, you may be sure they do not please interested individuals. The French, too, are light and fickle; and designing men, who have no weapon against good men but ridicule, already employ it to make a trifling nation laugh at its benefactors: and, if it is the fashion to laugh, the laws of fashion will be executed preferably to those of common sense.

There is a great place just vacant. The Maréchal de Mui, Secrétaire d'État pour la Guerre, died yesterday, having been cut the day before for the stone. The operation lasted thirty-five ages, that is, minutes!

Our Parliament meets on the 26th, and I suppose will act as infamously as it did last year. It cannot do worse,—scarce so ill, for now it cannot act inconsiderately. To joke in voting a civil war is the *comble* of infamy. I hope it will present flattering addresses on our disgraces, and heap taxes on those who admire the necessity of them. If the present generation alone would be punished by inviting the yoke, it were pity but it were already on their necks! Do not wonder at my indignation, nor at my indulging it. I can write freely hence—from England, where I may

find the Inquisition, it would not be so prudent ; but judge of our situation, when an Englishman, to speak his mind, must come to France ! and hither I will come unless the times alter. I had rather live where a Maupeou¹ is banished, than where he is Chief Justice².

I know nothing of their Royal Highnesses³, nor have heard of them since they were at Strasburg. I wrote twice to Venice ; and if they think me in England, and have written thither, I should have received the letter, as I did yours, unless it is stopped. I can give you no advice, but to act prudently and decently, as you always do. If you receive orders, you must obey them. If you do not, you may show disposition ; and yet I would not go too far. Even under orders, you may intimate concern ; but I would express nothing in writing. My warmth may hurt myself, but never shall make me forget the interest of my friends. Adieu !

1650. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Oct. 17, 1775.

PRINCESS, in spite of fortune, fate, and chance,
I'm once again return'd to you from France.

I will not maintain, Madam, that this couplet is absolutely stolen out of any French play, but it is so like the *début* of many of their tragedies, that I think it could not have come into my head if I had not remembered it. Whether it is Racine's or not, it suits my purpose so exactly, that I could not help employing it, and I beg your Ladyship will believe the sentiment sincere, though couched in poetry. I will not quote Virgil for the circumstance of

LETTER 1649. — ¹ Chancellor of France. *Walpole*.

Walpole.

³ The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester. *Walpole*.

² Alluding to Lord Mansfield.

my journey, for I was much more *terris jactatus* than *alto*; the roads were very rough, but the sea so smooth that it cost fifteen hours to pass from Calais to Dover, what wind there was being perfectly neuter. However, here I am, and as my motto says, ever yours, &c.

P.S. My letter concluded so happily, that though professional and civil conclusions are totally out of fashion, I could not help ending there; but to take off the formality, I add a few words; and to tell you I have bought your two bobbins and a bit of china; no, it is not come, but I hope will, and will be a great rarity: for to my sorrow I did not know that last year's Act, to favour the Bristol manufacturer, laid a duty of one hundred and fifty per cent. on French china, and I paid at Dover seven guineas and a half for a common set of coffee things that had cost me but five. As I came but this morning, I have not time to add more, though I would not let the newspaper have the pleasure of telling you that I was arrived.

P.S. I left poor Mr. Crawford flayed alive, that is, his foot—I never saw so horrid a sight. The quack brought off the whole coat of his foot at once, and it looks like a leg anatomized and thrown on a dunghill; yet the man had made him walk a mile on it the day before I set out. My Lord Lovat might as well have put on a cravat after his head was off.

1651. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 21, 1775.

I COULD tell you, Madam, when the moon will change, but not when Mr. Crawford will set out. Poor soul! I do not guess when he will be able; but, perhaps, he will

attempt it for variety. However, pray write to him; it will be kind, and direct it to Mr. Panchaud. If your letter misses him, there will be no great harm, as I suppose you will not tell him any great secrets.

For my visiting Amptill just now, it is totally impossible. I have run strangely in debt to my own business, and find my hands full. I had left a purchase or two here unfinished. My poor sister, Mrs. Daye, is dead, and I have her affairs to settle. General Cholmondeley has made me one of his executors, and though I shall give up that charge, I must give it up, and must go to town to-morrow upon it. I have commissions from France to execute; and, in short, have such a jumble of two nations in my head, that I want a few days of entire repose, before I shall get into my common sense again. Besides, come to Amptill! Why is not your Ladyship coming to town? I will not deliver a bobbin but in Seymour Place, nor make a visit farther out of town.

1652. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Oct. 23, 1775.

THIS will be delivered to you by Mr. Pars¹, a painter, who is going to improve himself in Italy. He has already great merit, and has done several things for me, particularly washed drawings of Strawberry, of which he can talk to you very perfectly. This was his style originally. He executed an excellent volume full of them for Lord Palmerston², one of the Lords of the Admiralty, his protector. He has since taken to oil and portraits. Pray assist him as much as you can, particularly by strong recommendations

LETTER 1652.—¹ Mr. Pars died at Rome in 1782. *Walpole*.

² Henry Temple, Viscount Palmer-

ston. Mr. Pars had been in Switzerland with his Lordship to take views. *Walpole*.

to Rome and Cardinal Albani³. Pray, too, make him do a view of Fiesole for me. He is very modest, sensible, and intelligent, and not mad, or I would not recommend him so strongly. I give him a letter to Sir William Hamilton.

1653. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 25, 1775.

I AM returned to my own Lares and Penates—to my dogs and cats; and was not a little edified by my journey. I saw a King who accords everything that is asked for the good of his people, and I saw two ministers, Messieurs de Malesherbes and Turgot, who do not let their master's benevolent disposition rust. The latter is attempting to take off *corvées*, that quintessence of cruel and ostentatious despotism, but the *country gentlemen*, that race of interested stupidity, will baffle him. Monsieur de Malesherbes, in the most simple and unaffected manner, gave me an account of his visitation of the Bastille, whence he released the prisoners, half of whom were mad with their misfortunes, and many of whom he could not find even the causes of their commitment. One man refused his liberty: he said he had been prisoner fifteen years, and had nothing in the world left; that the King lodged and fed him, and he would not quit the Bastille unless they would give him half his pension. M. de Malesherbes reported it to the King, who replied, 'C'est juste,' and the man has fifteen hundred livres a year and his freedom. This excellent magistrate, who made my tears run down my cheeks, added that what the prisoners complained of most was the want of pen and ink. He ordered it. The demons remonstrated and said the

³ Cardinal Alexander Albani, youngest nephew of Clement XI

and a great lover of *virtù*. He was also a friend to England. *Walpole*.

prisoners would only make use of the pen to write memorials against the ministers ; he replied, 'Tant mieux.' He is going to erect a court of six masters of request to examine the petitions of those who demand *lettres de cachet* for their relations. Under the late Duc de la Vrillière, his mistress, Madame Sabatin, had a bureau of printed *lettres de cachet* with blanks, which she sold for twenty-five louis apiece. When a great Scotch judge was last in France, at the restoration of the old Parliament, he said, 'If the ministers mean the good of the people, they are doing right, but if they regard the prerogative of the crown, very wrong.' What a diabolical But ! Do not imagine these ministers will hold their places long ; they will soon be epigrammatized out of them. The first event since my return, after hearing of this gaol-delivery, is Mr. Sayer¹ being sent to the Bastille ; but it is not the prisoners in this country that are mad, but the ministers. They have committed him for designing to steal the Tower and the King, he and one more ; and I suppose send them to New York ; not to Halifax, for that is gone, and Quebec too, and Boston by this time. So now we know what we have to do ; only retake all America, which is very easy, from three hundred thousand cowards.

26th, Arlington Street.

I had written thus far last night, as you perceive, and find your letter on my return, for which I would thank you more if you did not say such fine things to me. Pray never do any more ; I have no talent, nor anything else but taste for those who have, and that taste is almost a sinecure. If I had time I could increase your 'Kingstoniana' with still better stories, but she is not worth one's while. I have

¹ LETTER 1653.—¹ A banker of bad credit, arrested on a charge of high treason on the oath of an American officer named Richardson. The latter

swore that Sayer had offered him fifteen hundred pounds to assist him in seizing the Tower and the King's person.

but just a moment to ask if there is any chance of seeing you this winter, which would be a great comfort, and I am not young enough to put off my pleasures. Adieu !

Pray did you pay Mr. Peckitt ? Tell me that I may pay you or him.

1654. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Oct. 27, 1775.

I WAS at Strawberry Hill when your letter arrived, and could not thank you for it so early as I should have done if I had received it sooner. If my description of the *Moulin Joli* pleased you, it was from the circumstances of the place, for I neither describe well nor recount well, nor have any original talent. I pretend to nothing but taste for talents, and that taste is almost a sinecure. I am returned because I wanted to be *at home* ; not that I was particularly charmed with France, or impatient to be in England ; but when one is old and has no particular business anywhere, methinks one is *déplacé* anywhere but *chez soi*. The *Amor patriæ* burns in me no fiercer than love for my wife would, if I had one and she proved a shrew. I love the free constitution of England more than the acres, and should wish better to California if it had the better form of government ; not but I can feel the pride of patriotism when my country is worth being proud of : when it sinks by its own folly, I content myself with my citizenship of the world, and pray for that part that is most reasonable.

I could improve your 'Kingstoniana' if I had leisure ; the subject in truth is little worth it, but as superlative in its kind. My chief business with you is to know if I am likely to see you this winter. My pleasures grow dear to me because I have no long time to enjoy them, and cannot live on hopes. Though I still live in the world, most of

my hours are passed alone, because they are not passed with the few I love, and all the rest are perfectly indifferent to me. Old people are thought to have little affection: how is that possible, for they seem to like company to the last? I should as soon think of taking leave of everybody if I was dying. Of my cotemporaries for whom I do not care, I have seen or known enough, or too much, and to converse with young people is like asking for the beginning of a story of which one is never to hear the end. With you I can never pass time enough, and alas! pass very little; you are not, ought not to be so indifferent to the world as I am, and as you live more out of it, why should not you keep up a little acquaintance with it? Your chief reason against coming is worn out by length of time, and other circumstances are such as to dispense with the reiteration of the grievance. It would not be expected, and probably not desired; I dare to say the coolness is sufficiently established.

As I am in town you may expect to talk of what you will see so much in the newspapers, the commitment of Mr. Sayer; but it appears to me so nonsensical a business, that I charitably conclude the ministers have some deeper scheme in view. They can never have sent a man to the Tower that they should have sent to Bedlam, if they do not want a pretence for greater strokes; or choose to be laughed at for this, rather than have the people find fault with something else. However, they have brought themselves into such difficulties that I shall not wonder if they are puzzled which to prefer, and as it certainly is not genius that has led them into the scrape, it is not likely to help them out.

Tell me what is more to my purpose, what you have been doing. I am going to read Sterne's *Letters*. From Paris I have absolutely brought nothing at all: my good

friend, Europe, is worn out; perhaps genius may rekindle in America, but what is that to me? Adieu!

P.S. I have run through a volume of Sterne's *Letters*, and have read more unentertaining stuff. The Duke of Grafton, Lord Lyttelton, and the Bishop of Peterborough¹ divided yesterday with the opposition. Don't you think the ship is sinking? Come and see.

1655. TO THE DUKE OF RICHMOND.

MY DEAR LORD,

Oct. 27, 1775.

You have not been a very active opposition, but may plead in excuse that you could do no good. *Now* you can—or never. Give the ministers no respite. Press them with questions and motions, leave their poor heads no time to think of what they ought to think of, the next campaign. Call for papers. Don't mind being refused. Talk of their waste. Ask for pension lists, inquire after those scandalous ones to the widows or wives of Bradshaw, Nuthall¹, Fordyce. Lament the hard fate of the *poor country gentlemen* who must pay for all this waste, and the enormous expenses of the war too. Inquire how much of the national Debt has been paid in twelve years—and how much the late Addresses have cost. Ask if 5,000*l.* has not been sent this year to bribe the Indians, who yet have not joined *them*. Ask what douceurs have been given to Scotch contractors. Ask what the Catholics in Canada have done in return for the restoration of their religion and the abolition of juries

LETTER 1654.—¹ Dr. Hinchliffe.

LETTER 1655.—¹ Thomas Nuthall, Solicitor to the Treasury; he died a few hours after being shot by a highwayman on Hounslow Heath in March 1775. Horace Walpole states that he had embezzled nine-

teen thousand pounds, and that his widow had a pension of three hundred pounds to induce her to give up her husband's papers; he had been engaged in many election matters. (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 496.)

—and will you not ask who was the author of that code? Is abolition of juries part of the spirit of toleration? Will you not inquire whether Lord Dunmore² has not for these two years (before the Virginians took any part) endeavoured to involve them in a war with the Indians? Will you not ask whether they have not tried to raise Roman Catholics in Ireland? Suppose you inquired what the prosecutions of Wilkes cost (above 100,000*l.*), and whether they intend (for the ease of country gentlemen) to lay out as much on Sayer. Will you not complain how long the half-pay was delayed, nor inquire into the expenses of the transports to Boston? Will you not lament the hard fate of the soldiers forced to go against their countrymen, and then left without bark or bandages for their wounds, and with nothing but salt provisions? Will you not smile at Gage being recalled and made Generalissimo? In short, will you neither laugh nor cry, or will you leave them to laugh if you do not make them cry? The Duke of Grafton and Lord Lyttelton see their difficulties—will you not make them feel them? Why did General Burgoyne desire to be recalled? and why is he still employed? Since the Prerogative Proclamation cuts off all intercourse, is Parliament to vote money in the dark? Will you not move to know whether Halifax and Nova Scotia and Quebec are gone? Will you not complain of all intelligence being stifled, and the nation being kept in profound ignorance and delusion? Are there no petitions from the West Indian Islands? Shall not the good country gentlemen be let into their situation? In short, my dear Lord, if you please, you may pelt and harass them with questions and delays, which they will attend more to than to America. Frighten them, or at least other people, with the French preparing to attack us in the East Indies. And pray ask

² Governor of Virginia.

whether the stocks have not been kept up by the trust-money in Chancery. I will engage to furnish you with motions and grievances to midsummer—and if you keep this and turn to it, you will not want subjects. Tell them of all their false promises and prophecies, not one of which has been fulfilled; and do not forget Lord Hillsborough's breach of the King's faith. You have spirit and activity enough yourself, my Lord—breathe it into your friends; and make them inquire whether the conciliatory commissioners are gone, and what their commissions are; and whether they expect the Americans will trust them, *when the vile equivocatory bill of conciliation last year Lord North himself could not carry till Wedderburn declared it was not meant in earnest?*—but is it not plain, by their having recourse to it in the Speech, that they are already treating? Nor is this the only falsehood in the Speech: they talk of foreign Powers offering them troops; is *begging* being *offered*? And if those foreign Powers are not Russia, but little Hesse, &c., are those foreign *Powers*? I would even move to address, that if Russians are sent, no post may be put into their hands—no matter for a negative being put; it would get into the votes and spread jealousy.

There, my Lord, is a plan for your campaign. I am very presumptuous; but I will ask an account of it at the end of the session. I hope you are content with Mr. C.³

1656. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Oct. 28, 1775.

As this letter will go to Paris by a private hand before it gets to the post, I shall not change the late free style of my letters, but speak my mind. Not having always the same opportunity, I shall be more circumspect both for your sake and my own.

³ Probably General Conway.

At my return I found everything in great confusion. The ministers had only provoked and united—not intimidated, wounded, or divided America. Errors in or neglect of execution have rendered everything much worse; and at this instant they are not sure that the King has a foot of dominion left on that continent. Boston must be, if it is not, abandoned: Halifax, with a stand of seven thousand arms, artillery, &c., is taken¹,—and well it might be! It was guarded but by fifty men! Canada is in equal danger, and the first letters are likely to say it is gone. The ministers say it will take sixty thousand men to reconquer America. They will as soon have sixty thousand armies. Whether they can get any Russians is not even yet certain; and, as it is said they must buy them by ceding some post, it is not credible that the other European Powers will wink at that growing puissance becoming a maritime one. Distresses and difficulties increase every day, and genius does not burgeon in proportion.

Before I tell you of the opening of the Parliament, I must treat you with a farce, which is contrary to the theatric rule. Whether they were frightened themselves, or meant to frighten others, two days before the meeting, the ministers cried out, ‘A plot!’ and took and committed to the Tower a Mr. Sayer, a banker of no great credit, and lately one of Wilkes’s sheriffs. A young American officer of still worse character swore Sayer had tried to bribe him to betray the Tower; and, as if that was not trusting him enough, communicated his intention of seizing the King as he should go to the House. The ministers, as grave as they looked, could not keep anybody from laughing—no, though they trebled the Guards. In short, I have heard this morning that they have blundered in the warrant, just as they did in Wilkes’s, must release Sayer, and he will be at

LETTER 1656.—¹ This did not prove true. *Walpole*.

liberty, instead of being, as he ought to be, in Bedlam. Earl Rochford² will be prosecuted in his room, instead of being shut up for a fool, as he ought to be.

In both Houses the war was brisk and warm; the Lords sat till eleven, and the Commons till four, and the court was galled, though it kept the field. In the former House the Lord Privy Seal Grafton deserted and fired on them; so did the *virtuous* Lord Lyttelton³, whom they have so much tried to blanch; but as they had only given him whitewash, not money to buy it, he is seeking to plunder from the other camp. In the Commons, Mr. Conway, in a better speech than ever was made, exposed all their outrages and blunders; and Charles Fox told Lord North that nor Alexander nor Cæsar had ever conquered so much as he had lost in one campaign. Even his Lordship's friends, nay the Scotch, taunt him in public with his laziness.

This is a sketch of the present situation: I think it will not mend abroad, and must grow more turbulent at home. France and Spain, by only feeding the war underhand, can baffle all our attempts; and without their declaring themselves, we must exhaust our men, money, navies, and trade. These are the four trifling articles we pay for the old scheme of arbitrary power. When will the Kings of England learn how great they may be by the constitution; how sure of ruin if they try to be despotic? Cannot the fate of the Stuarts teach even the House of Hanover to have common sense? In the meantime, if France has the sense to keep its present ministers⁴, it will soon be greater than ever. I could not have believed, if I had not seen with my own eyes, how very flourishing it is to what

² The Secretary of State who committed Sayer. *Walpole*.

³ Thomas, second Lord Lyttelton. *Walpole*.

⁴ It had not; Turgot was removed, and Malesherbes resigned. *Walpole*.

it was four years ago. It is safe, too, in that country to indulge the people in plenty, ease, liberty; for they who could admire even Louis Quatorze adored Henri Quatre; but what signify commonplace reflections? Princes do not read my letters, but always forfeit their own greatness by listening to ministers who dip them in visions of power only to augment their own. A king might go to sleep and be happy, and let his people be so, if he had no ministers, who would abuse his authority during his nap. Adieu! my dear Sir; I have not time or occasion to say more. I have given you a clue to my future letters, and you will not want to have notes to them.

1657. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Nov. 9, 1775.

You say ironically, Madam, that I do not think at all about politics. I object to the expression, more than to the purport of that phrase, if you mean by it that I am eager. The truth is, I think too seriously on our present situation to be eager. Eagerness implies hopes—and I have none. I think this country undone, almost beyond redemption. Victory in any war but a civil one fascinates mankind with a vision of glory. What should we gain by triumph itself? Would America laid waste, deluged with blood, plundered, enslaved, replace America flourishing, rich, and free? Do we want to reign over it, as the Spaniards over Peru, depopulated? Are desolate regions preferable to commercial cities? But if the provincials conquer, are they, like lovers, to kiss and be friends? Who are the heroes, where are the statesmen, that shall restore us to the position in which we stood two years ago?

These reflections fill me with melancholy, not with ardour. My pride, as an Englishman, is hurt. I often go to France

without loving that country, and I know with indignation, I saw with indignation, that they exult in our blunders and absurdity. We have already saved them more than half the labour of the next war, and shall bring it on as soon again as it would have come. *Then* will the ministers triumph? *Then* will begging another peace avail? Perhaps I am foolish to feel all this. Young men that must live to see it would have reason to be hurt, if young men were so ill employed as to anticipate the vexations of age. I probably have little time to be witness to the humiliations that are approaching. Father Paul's¹ *esto perpetua!* was more the prayer of a good man, than of a wise one. Countries are but great families, that rise from obscurity to dignity and then degenerate. This little island, that for many centuries was but a merchant, married a *great fortune* in the last war, got a title, grew insolent and extravagant, despised its original counter, quarrelled with its factors, kicked its plebeian wife out of doors, and thought, by putting on an old red coat, to hector her relations out of the rest of her fortune, which remained in their hands as trustees. Europe, that was jealous of this upstart captain's sudden rise, encouraged him in his folly, in hopes of seeing him quite undone. End of volume the first. The second part is in the press.

News of to-day.—The Duke of Grafton dismissed.

News of to-morrow.—Lord George Germaine, Secretary of State.

No news.—Lord Lyttelton to have a place².

I have been in pain for the Duke of Gloucester; but as no account has come since last Friday, I flatter myself he is out of danger, his disorder being the same as he had

LETTER 1657.—¹ Pietro Sarpi (1552–1623), known as Fra Paolo, the historian of the Council of Trent.

² That of Chief Justice in Eyre south of Trent.

before when last at Florence, and which would either have carried him off soon, or must have been stopped by the bark, as I trust it has been. But I am prepared against all events: time is a great philosophizer. You say you augur so ill, Madam, that you will not be scandalized at the gravity of my letter. Mine take their complexion from the colour of the hour, and, as cheerfulness oftenest predominates in me, I shall laugh again. It is very hard if they who are innocent of their country's ruin may not smile, as well as they who are guilty of it. I can conceive why Cæsar should have cut his own throat, but I never understood why Cato did.

1658. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Nov. 14, 1775.

YOUR letter, my dear Sir, of the 28th, which I received last night, is infinitely kind to me—but is that new? We had not only been alarmed to the utmost about the Duke¹, but remained ten days in that anxiety. Thank God! yesterday a letter under his own hand dispelled all our fears, and he is so well as to be set out to Rome. I am very sorry you had received no orders for your behaviour, because it leaves the Duke room to think you might have done more than I hope you have done; but your first duty is to the King; you were my friend long before I had the honour of knowing his Royal Highness, and no attachments of mine can make me ever even wish that any friend of mine should act contrary to his duty. I am sure you have not; and if the Duke should not be quite pleased with you, though I flatter myself he is too just not to weigh your situation, you must bear it with patience, and comfort yourself with having acted rightly.

LETTER 1658.—¹ The Duke of Gloucester. *Walpole.*

Though I hear so much of it, I know not what to say of America. It is certain that the campaign has answered none of the expectations of the administration. It seems to be the opinion now that they will think of pacific measures. They have even talked in Parliament of treating. You may be sure that system would be agreeable to my politics; but I doubt peace is not so near. The Parliament grants whatever is asked; and yet a great alteration has happened in the administration. The Duke of Grafton has changed sides, and was turned out last Friday. Lord Rochford, too, has retired, though not out of humour; and Lord Dartmouth has quitted the American province and taken the Privy Seal. Lord George Germaine is made Secretary of State for America, and Lord Weymouth has taken the southern province. Lord Ashburnham is to be Groom of the Stole, Lord Pelham Master of the Great Wardrobe, and Lord Lyttelton Justice in Eyre. The town is impatient to see whether this change of men implies any change of measures. I do not see why it should, for none of the new ministers have ever inclined to the Americans; and I doubt whether the success of the latter will make them have a better disposition towards the present administration. They have felt their strength, and experienced how much less hurt we can do them than we imagined. If they have such ideas of independence as have been imputed to them, and as probably some ambitious men among them may have, we have done nothing to convince them that their plan is impracticable; but for me, I own I know nothing, and all my conjectures may be wrong.

We have scarce any other news. Madame Kingston has petitioned the House of Lords for her trial; but they seem neither eager to acquit or condemn her. Nobody would mind the first, and she would not mind the second, as

it would go only to infamy, which she has shown she can digest.

Orloff the Great, or rather the Big², is here; and as proud of his infamous diamonds as the Duchess of Kingston herself. He dances gigantic dances and makes gigantic love; but no conquests: yet he has quitted his post with honour, for the Empress has appointed two to supply his functions—I suppose they are Gog and Magog. Orloff talks an infinite deal of nonsense; but parts are not necessary to a royal favourite or to an assassin.

I am rejoiced you are to have so much of your nephew, and that Lady Lucy is better. I long heartily for a little *Man-n*.

You will ere long see Mr. Pars, a young painter, who is going to study at Rome. I had given him a strong letter to you. Poor man! He has lost his portmanteau between Calais and Paris, and with it everything he had in the world; yet he persists. Pray be kind to him for my sake and for his misfortune. He is very ingenious, and has taken to oils. He was admirable in washed views, and has done several of Strawberry, of which he can talk to you by heart. Assist him too in recommendations at Rome as much as you can. He is particularly patronized by Lord Palmerston, one of the Lords of the Admiralty.

So the Pretender is in a dying way! and wants an heir!—It is not a race of phoenixes. Sir Roger Newdigate is at Rome, and formerly would have been proud to be chief mourner at his funeral.

You may imagine I shall not be quite easy till the Duchess³ is delivered and well. I trembled for her when the Duke was ill, as his death might have occasioned hers too.

² The favourite lover of the Empress Catherine II. *Walpole*.

³ The Duchess of Gloucester. *Walpole*.

1659. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Nov. 18, 1775.

BE perfectly at ease and happy, our Lady! for *our* Lord spoke with modesty, decency, dignity, sense, and conviction. He regretted being forced to quit his friends¹, though not so much as they regret his quitting them: all this I firmly believe, for I know nothing of the matter, having gone out of town yesterday, and being but this minute returned. I do know he spoke, for he told me so himself when I called yesterday to leave your cup with him; but as he is the last man in the world to commend himself, he would not tell me a syllable, but that he soon recovered the first awful moment of hearing his own voice in a dead silence. I will answer for all the rest. He said his brother spoke charmingly, and Charles Fox better than ever. He made such a pathetic *éloge* of the two brothers that every feeling eye was in tears. I am going about the town to hear all their praises, but I must not expect them in some houses. Oh, *notre dame*, give us a son and heir! I would vow a silver babe to Loretto, if that would do.

1660. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Nov. 23, 1775.

As the two ladies must be very angry at Lord O., I am not much surprised, Madam, that they impute his desertion to you. They must both think it a great reflection on a man's understanding to be governed by his wife; and to charge it on your Ladyship is to depreciate *him*. In truth, when one can fix the blemish of madness on Mr. Crewe,

LETTER 1659.—¹ Lord Ossory and his brother, Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, had left the court party, and declared themselves in opposition.

only to keep another nephew from making him a visit, one must have very little charity for one's neighbour. However, be easy, Madam ; I dare to say they will make Lord Ossory amends by offering to buy him off, and if they could disgrace him in that manner, they would perfectly forgive him. The speeches have given me additional pleasure, as I hear a third aunt, who is not displeased at them, was told (before they spoke) that they were men of no consequence but from being her nephews. I hope they will keep up their own importance, or they will be swallowed up in Lord George's¹ fame, who engrosses all tongues. He puts me in mind of some lines written by Lord Lansdowne, when prisoner in the Tower, in the same room where my father had been confined ; the last verse was,

Some fall so hard, they bound and rise again.

I think nobody can doubt of Lord George's resolution, since he has exposed himself to the artillery of the whole town. Indeed I always believed him brave, and that he sacrificed himself to sacrifice Prince Ferdinand.

I wish I could tell you anything but politics, Madam, politician as you are christened by your godmothers ; but one hears nothing else. On Sunday night, indeed, I was singularly entertained at Monsieur de Guines's, who gave a vast supper to the Prince of Hesse and the goddesses most in fashion, as the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Sefton, &c. We were twenty-eight at supper ; but before it, a Monsieur Tessier², of whom I have heard much in France, acted an entire play of ten characters, and varied his voice, and countenance, and manner, for each so perfectly, that he

LETTER 1660. — ¹ Lord George Germain.

² ' M. Le Tessier, receveur général des fermes de Lyon, homme d'esprit, ayant la passion du théâtre, et étant comédien de la tête aux pieds, a

imaginé de former sa voix, naturellement flexible, à lire tous les rôles d'une pièce, en leur donnant à chacun le ton de leur âge et de leur caractère.' (Grimm, *Correspondance Littéraire*, ed. 1831, vol. viii. p. 310.)

did not name the persons that spoke, nor was it necessary. I cannot decide to which part he did most justice, but I would go to the play every night if I could see it so acted.

I have heard to-day that your Ladyship has not the sole honour of perverting Lord Ossory. I am said to be the serpent that whispered Eve; and should be proud of it, if both imputations were not affronts to Lord Ossory's understanding, who will do me the justice to allow that I had so much more respect for it, that I never had the impertinence of his angry friends to imagine he was to be led; a civility for which he is not much obliged to them. Nor do they know how very seldom I see him, though I am so much in his way wherever he goes. It is an additional reason for my wishing your Ladyship in town, that I should see him sometimes. My poor old Lady Blandford is dying³; she fell down on Monday and broke her thigh—at 78!

P.S. As I was going to seal my letter, I received your Ladyship's thanks for the cup, which indeed did not deserve that you should give yourself so much trouble on purpose. You have always been so good to me, Madam, and I am so grateful that if my *souvenirs* were marked with cups, there would be many more than milestones from hence to Ampthill.

1661. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Nov. 27, 1775.

I THOUGHT it long since I heard from you. It is plain you did not forget me, for the first moment of an opportunity to show me kindness made you show it. Fortunately I had written to Lord Strafford the very day you wrote to me, and our letters passed each other, though without bowing.

³ She lived till 1779.

I think it still more fortunate that I had not written sooner, because I like to be obliged to you. I had delayed because in truth I had nothing to say but what I thought; and when my friends and I do not think alike, I prefer silence to contradiction or disputes, for I cannot say what I do not think, especially to my friends; to other people one can talk a good deal of nonsense, which serves instead of thinking.

Your delay of coming displeases me, because what I wish, I wish for immediately. When spring comes, I shall be glad my joy was postponed, and I like better to see you at Strawberry than in town, especially when Strawberry is in its beauty: and as you and it are two chiefs of the few pleasures I have left, or to come, I am luxurious and love a complete banquet.

What shall I say more? talk politics? no; we think too much alike. England was, Scotland is—indeed by the blunders the latter has made one sees its Irish origin,—but I had rather talk of anything else. I see nothing but ruin, whatever shall happen; and what idle solicitude is that of childless old people, who are anxious about the first fifty years after their death, and do not reflect that in the eternity to follow, fifty or five hundred years are a moment, and that all countries fall sooner or later!

Naturally I fly to books: there is a finis too, for I cannot read Dean Tucker¹, nor newspapers. We have had nothing at all this winter but Sterne's *Letters*, and what are almost as nothingly—Lady Luxborough's. She does not write ill, or, as I expected, affectedly, like a woman, but talks of *scrawls*, and of her letters being *stupid*. She had no spirit, no wit, knew no events; she idolizes poor Shenstone, who was scarce above her, and flatters him, to be flattered. A

LETTER 1661. — ¹ Josiah Tucker He published several pamphlets on
(1712-1799), Dean of Gloucester. the American War.

stronger proof of her having no taste is, that she says coldly, she likes Gray's Churchyard *well*. In good truth the productions of this country and age are suited to its natives. Mr. Cumberland, the maker of plays, told me lately, *it was pity Gray's letters were printed; they had disappointed him much*. No doubt he likes Sterne's, and Shenstone's, and Lady Luxborough's. Oh, Dodsley, print away: you will never want authors or readers, unless a classic work like Gray's Life should, as Richardson said of Milton, be 'born two thousand years after its time!'

I approve your printing in manuscript, that is, not for the public, for who knows how long the public will be able, or be permitted to read? Bury a few copies against this island is rediscovered. Some American versed in the old English language will translate it, and revive the true taste in gardening; though he will smile at the diminutive scenes on the little Thames when he is planting a forest on the banks of the Oronoko. I love to skip into futurity and imagine what will be done on the giant scale of a new hemisphere; but I am in little London, and must go and dress for a dinner with some of the inhabitants of that ancient metropolis, now in ruins, which was really for a moment the capital of a large empire, but the poor man who made it so outlived himself and the duration of the empire.

1662. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Dec. 4, 1775.

I PERCEIVED I had not heard from your Ladyship for some time, but your silence would not have occasioned mine, if I had known anything worth telling you. I have not the talent of my brethren, the gazetteers, who always learn a sheet full of news, whether anything happens or not; but then they have a crop of debates. I believe

nobody in London knows so little of what passes in Parliament as I do. Mr. Ackland¹ had run his head against Charles Fox a week before I heard of it. The town is beautified with fourscore knights, of new or old Scotia, in yellow ribbons, and yet I have not seen one of them. How should I see or know anything? I seldom stir out of my house before seven in the evening, see very few persons, and go to fewer places, make no new acquaintance, and have seen most of my old wear out. Loo at Princess Amelie's, loo at Lady Hertford's, are the capital events of my history, and a Sunday alone, at Strawberry, my chief entertainment. All this is far from gay; but as it neither gives me *ennui*, nor lowers my spirits, it is not uncomfortable, and I prefer it to being *déplacé* in younger company. My greatest objection is, that it often makes me a very unentertaining correspondent at Amptill; but this is almost as dull a season of the year as autumn. I would promise it should mend after Christmas, but happily you will be in town then, and I shall pass my time more agreeably, and have no occasion to write.

I am very sorry Lady Holland is out of order; I hope not at all seriously, and that you have no occasion to be in the least alarmed. The sale at Holland House will produce treasures. I did not go; it would have been a horrid sight to me who have lived there so much, but I hear the most common furniture has sold as dear as relics.

There is another thing concerns me too,—Sir George Macartney's voyage to the Government of the Grenades.

LETTER 1662.—¹ Major John Dyke Acland (d. 1778), eldest son of Sir Thomas Acland, seventh Baronet, whom he predeceased; M.P. for Callington. He married a daughter of Fox's uncle, the Earl of Ilchester. 'In one of the debates on the militia, Charles Fox saying it was not fit to be trusted in hands who could petition the King for pushing the war

against America, Mr. Ackland, his cousin, a hot Tory, warmly resented it, and said it was in fitter hands than in those of men who had ruined themselves by the most scandalous vices. This personality, unprovoked by any, gave offence. Fox replied: he confessed his errors, and wished he could atone for them.' (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 523.)

There is nobody who is merely an acquaintance that I should regret more. He is extremely good-humoured, equal, conversable on all subjects, unaffected, and perfectly agreeable in great or small companies. Methinks it would be very just to write a *North Briton* against Lord Bute for doing so little for his own son-in-law.

It is a little late in my letter to express my grief for your Ladyship's—what disorder? You have not told me, only that it is a sort of influenza; so I have a proportionate sort of concern. It would be very inconvenient to me to be much afflicted just now for anything, for the King of Prussia is dying. I would venture to rejoice even if I were his subject, for a worse Dionysius cannot succeed.

Pray, Madam, tell the nymphs of Ampthill that if I had a spark of imagination left it should be at their service; but old people do nothing but tell old stories, far from inventing new. The only thing I would ever allow myself to write more should be like Brantôme; but as everybody's history in these days is written in newspapers or magazines, my trouble is luckily saved, and for anything else, it is a maxim of mine that old folks ought to do nothing at all, for nothing becomes them. I am very strict to this rule, and, if I ever break it, set it down that I begin to dote.

Tuesday.

I have just sent to Lady Holland, who has had a good night, and is much better.

1663. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 8, 1775.

I HAVE received another kind letter from you, my dear Sir, about the Duke and Duchess. You are very good to inform me; for though the Duchess's daughters¹ send me general accounts, I know nothing directly, having received

LETTER 1663.—¹ The Ladies Waldegrave.

but a single letter from her Royal Highness since they set out. I need not say to you that I never had such an honour from the Duke. He, I do not doubt, is recovered, and will for some time be the better, as he was before, from so wholesome an illness. I cannot be so tranquil on her situation till after her delivery. The greatness of her courage makes her support conflicts; but, perhaps, women of less resolution, who abandon themselves to fears, undergo less struggles.

Your brother, I believe, is recovered, at least Mr. Croft thinks so. He is always lame, it is true, but his face still fresh and juvenile. You and I are wrinkled parchments to our elder brothers. They are Glastonbury thorns and bloom at their Christmas. I pretend to grow a little fatter, but every other winter unravels me like Penelope's web.

There is nothing new here, at least within the sphere of my knowledge. That circle is of slender extent, and does not intersect either that of the court or the other of the opposition: the secrets of neither reach me, who seek not to penetrate them. We have both martial and pacific symptoms. Commissaries² are going with olive-branches, and Acts of Parliament and regiments with daggers and swords. We seem to enrage America, as if it were a passionate man who is very sorry the moment his passion is over. The House of Commons sits eternally, though half of the usual number are gone out of town.

I saw the Duchess of Beaufort the other night, who inquired much after you. You know her daughter³ is soon to marry Lord Granby.

Tell me truly, is or has the Gabrielli been a great singer? She has, at least, not honoured us but with a most slender low voice. Her action is just, but colder than a vestal's.

² Lord Howe and his brother were appointed Commissaries.

³ Lady Mary Somerset.

However, as you know, she carries the resemblance no further, and, consequently, is kept by a Mr. Piers, a very rich gentleman of Yorkshire, who is so profuse to her, that I suppose she will be more capricious than ever. We import superannuated sirens, and spoil them more than the Italians can afford to do, who at least enjoy them young.

That brave statue, Sir Charles Saunders⁴, died yesterday. The present war has not yet furnished us with any recruit of heroes. A civil war used to be prolific—Europe is very much worn out. It is America's turn to be fruitful of genius. The last comet of this hemisphere, the King of Prussia, is on its *return*. A wit of last century, when *conceits* were in fashion, would have said that its blazing tail turned out, as some philosophers have held, to be water, for he is dying of a dropsy. I care not of what; the world will be delivered from one of its visitations. When Voltaire follows him, their meeting would make a good Dialogue of the Dead.

I will not lengthen my letter when I have no more to say, for though we have an empire at each end of the world, and a war in both, they do not keep us in daily news; and, what is much stranger, their metropolis, London, stagnates; but it is generally so about Christmas and autumn: in February, March, April, and May, our pulses are very feverish.

1664. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 10, 1775.

I WAS very sorry to have been here, dear Sir, the day you called on me in town. It is so difficult to uncloister you, that I regret not seeing you when you are out of your own ambry. I have nothing new to tell you that is very old; but you can inform me of something within your own

⁴ Admiral and Knight of the Bath. He was remarkably taciturn. *Walpole*.

district. Who is the author, E. B. G.¹, of a version of Mr. Gray's Latin Odes into English? and of an Elegy on my wolf-devoured dog, poor Tory?—a name you will marvel at in a dog of mine; but his godmother was the widow of Alderman Parsons, who gave him at Paris to Lord Conway, and he to me. The author is a poet, but makes me blush, for he calls Mr. Gray and me *congenial pair*. Alas! I have no genius; and if any symptom of talent, so inferior to Gray's, that Milton and Quarles might as well be coupled together. We rode over the Alps in the same chaise, but Pegasus drew on his side, and a cart-horse on mine. I am too jealous of his fame to let us be coupled together.

This author says he has lately printed at Cambridge a Latin translation of the Bards; I should be much obliged to you for it.

I do not ask you if Cambridge has produced anything, for it never does. Have you made any discoveries? Has Mr. Lort? Where is he? Does Mr. Tyson engrave no more?

My plates for Strawberry advance leisurely. I am about nothing. I grow old and lazy, and the present world cares for nothing but politics, and satisfies itself with writing in newspapers. If they are not bound up and preserved in libraries, posterity will imagine that the art of printing was gone out of use. Lord Hardwicke has indeed reprinted his heavy volume of Sir Dudley Carleton's *Dispatches*, and says I was in the wrong to despise it. I never met with anybody that thought otherwise. What signifies raising the dead so often, when they die the next minute? Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. W.

LETTER 1664.—¹ Edward Burnaby Greene (d. 1788), at this time a brewer in Westminster. He pub-

lished various translations from Greek and Latin poets.

1665. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 11, 1775.

DID you hear that scream?—Don't be frightened, Madam; it was only the Duchess of Kingston last Sunday was seven-night at chapel: but it is better to be prepared; for she has sent word to the House of Lords that her nerves are so bad she intends to scream for these two months, and therefore they must put off her trial. They are to take her throes into consideration to-day; and that there may be sufficient room for the length of her veil and train, and attendants, have a mind to treat her with Westminster Hall. I hope so, for I should like to see this *comédie larmoyante*; and, besides, I conclude, it would bring your Ladyship to town. You shall have timely notice.

There is another comedy infinitely worth seeing—Monsieur Le Tessier. He is Préville, and Caillaud, and Garrick, and Weston¹, and Mrs. Clive, all together; and as perfect in the most insignificant part, as in the most difficult. To be sure, it is hard to give up loo in such fine weather, when one can play from morning till night. In London, Pam can scarce get a house till ten o'clock. If you happen to see the General, your husband, make my compliments to him, Madam; his friend the King of Prussia is going to the devil and Alexander the Great.

1666. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, Dec. 14, 1775.

Our letters probably passed by each other on the road, for I wrote to you on Tuesday, and have this instant received one from you, which I answer directly, to beg pardon for

LETTER 1665.—¹ Thomas Weston (1737–1776), comedian.

my incivility, nay, ingratitude, in not thanking you for your present of a whole branch of most reputable ancestors, the *Derehaughs*—why, the *Derehaughs* alone would make gentlemen of half the modern peers, English or Irish. I doubt my journey to France was got into my head, and left no room for an additional quarter—but I have given it to Edmondson, and ordered him to take care that I am born again from the *Derehaughs*. This Edmondson has got a ridiculous notion into his head that another, and much ancients of my progenitors, Sir Henry Walpole, married his wife Isabella Fitz-Osbert, when she was widow to Sir Walter Jernegan; whereas all the *Old Testament* says Sir Walter married Sir Henry's widow¹. Pray send me your authority to confound this gainsayer, if you know anything particular of the matter.

I had not heard of the painting you tell me of. As those boobies, the Society of Antiquaries, have gotten hold of it, I wonder their *piety* did not make them bury it again, as they did the clothes of Edward I. I have some notion that in Vertue's MSS. or somewhere else, I don't know where, I have read of some ancient painting at the Rose Tavern. This I will tell *you*—but Mr. Gough is such a bear, that I shall not satisfy him about it. That Society, when they are puzzled, have recourse to me; and that would be so often, that I shall not encourage them. They may blunder as much as they please, from their heavy President² down to the pert Governor Pownall, who accounts for everything immediately, before the Creation, or since. Say only to Mr. Gough, that I said I had not leisure now to examine Vertue's MSS. If I find anything there, *you* shall know, but I have no longer any eagerness to communicate what I discover. When there was so little taste for MSS. which

LETTER 1666.—¹ This was the case.

² Dean Milles.

Mr. Gray thought worth transcribing, and which were so valuable, would one offer more pearls?

Boydel brought me this morning another number of the prints from the pictures at Houghton. Two or three in particular are most admirably executed—but alas! it will be twenty years before the set is completed. That is too long to look forward at any age—and at mine!—nay, people will be tired in a quarter of the time. Boydel, who knows this country, and still more this town, thinks so too. Perhaps there will be newer, or at least more fashionable ways of engraving, and the old will be despised—or, which is still more likely, nobody will be able to afford the expense. Who would lay a plan for anything in an overgrown metropolis hurrying to its fall?

I will return you Mr. Gough's letter when I get a frank. Adieu!

1667. TO DR. PERCY.

Dec. 14, 1775.

MR. WALPOLE is extremely sorry he was out twice when Dr. Percy gave himself the trouble of calling, and will have the honour of waiting on Dr. Percy next Tuesday at one o'clock if he will give leave. In the meantime Mr. Walpole (who is going out of town for two days) is very happy to oblige the Doctor and consequently the public, with the use of Sir T. Wyat's Speeches: and will be as ready to lend the drawings of Lord Surrey and Sir Thomas, if the Doctor intends to give prints of them.

LETTER 1667.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in British Museum.

1668. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 17, 1775.

I AM afraid the Pope will be shocked : matters go very ill with his friend the Duchess of Kingston. She pretended to tease the House of Lords for her trial, though privately soliciting against it. Lord Mansfield entered the lists as her knight ; and contended for a private hearing in the chamber of Parliament ; and treated the affair very lightly. This revolted the Chancellor¹ ; and he drew her failings in very ungentle colours. A committee was appointed to examine precedents. Her Grace was alarmed ; went to St. James's Chapel at eight in the morning ; and was delivered of a scream that roused all the palace. The obdurate Lords' committees proceeded. The tide was turned ; and everybody spoke all they knew : collusion between the Duchess and Lord Bristol, to impose on the Ecclesiastical Court ; money taken by the Earl ; perjury on both sides ; the register of their marriage torn out, which is felony ! a new certificate said to be forged : in short, nothing but a trial in Westminster Hall could satisfy justice and the public. Screams now ripened to madness ; and the Duchess begged a respite for two months. That was pretty long. Her physicians were sent for. Three appeared : and, though they would not, as she desired, say that she would be mad for two months, they did allow that she is troubled with a great alienation of mind : in proof of which she has written to the King, to remind him of his grandfather's and his own goodness to her ; hoping he would not abandon her in her distress ; and begging a *noli prosequi* ; which his Majesty will not grant her. The committee went on ; and have decided that she shall be tried in Westminster Hall :

and Lord Lyttelton, as bashful as herself, said that, as she could not pretend to chastity or modesty, there was no room for compassion. This hopeful young man, who, on being refused a place, spoke *for* the Americans; and, in two days, on getting one, *against* them, being reproached with such precipitate changes, said that, with his fortune, nobody could suppose he thought of the value of the salary.

What this heroic lady will attempt next is very unknown. If she decamps, outlawry and forfeitures follow. Laudanum she had recourse to formerly on an emergency. If she adheres to frenzy she must retire to a mad-house. If she braves her fate, I shall not wonder if she escapes. A fair one, more artful, but not of so high rank, nor patronized by a Chief Justice, has just foiled the law; though nobody questions her guilt. This is a Mrs. Margaret Caroline Rudd; whose history would make as large a volume as Madame de Kingston's. She sent her lawyer a brief of which he could not make head or tail. He went to her for one more clear: 'And do you imagine,' said she, 'that I will trust you, or any attorney in England, with the truth of my story? Take your brief; meet me in the Old Bailey, and I will ask you the necessary questions.' At her trial, she did write sixty notes to him, and with such artful interrogatories, that she was acquitted; and the whole court shouted with applause. I must tell you one more anecdote of Mrs. Rudd. Preparatory to her trial, she sent for some brocaded silks to a mercer; she pitched on a rich one, and ordered him to cut off the proper quantity; but the mercer, reflecting that if she was hanged, as was probable, he should never be paid, pretended he had no scissors; but would carry home the piece, cut off what she wanted, and send it to Newgate. She saw his apprehension; pulled out her pocket-book; and giving him a bank-note of twenty pounds, said, 'There is a pair of scissors.'

Such quickness is worth an hundred screams. We have no Joans of Arc, nor Catharines de' Medici; but this age has heroines after its own fashion: ay, and heroes too. *Arts and sciences have not only travelled west*, but north, too. Prodigious crimes can flourish in the most rigorous climates. Except poisoning the last Pope, Rome itself, the soil of Neros and Borgias, has not produced a murder worth sixpence these two hundred years. Atrocious genius is got to Berlin and Petersburg. In two or three centuries, I suppose, there will be some horrible metropolis beyond the Atlantic, or under the South Pole: and, as the press disperses *useful* precedents, two or three kings and queens will find it suits their convenience to divide some territory, to which they have no title, near the Straits of Magellan.

Arlington Street, 18th, Monday night.

The first thing I heard to-day on coming to town made me think of writing another letter; yet as this is written, and may divert you after some days when your mind is resettled, I let it go, but haste to tell you that what by your letter to-day you seemed to expect, is arrived: your brother² died on Saturday. I sent instantly to Mr. Croft to know the purport of the will. He sent me word it is in his hands; that he understands he and Mr. Foote are executors, and that he is to carry it to Linton on Thursday. This will be a century to my impatience. It is what occupies me. I don't act the farce of condolence—you had not seen this brother these forty years; he had little affection for you, and was not so amiable as to make tender and lasting impressions forty years ago. I am even glad you are prepared to expect unkindness, though I should be outrageous if he could or has done you any hurt. I hope you have kept his letter that you mention. If he has

² Edward Louisa Mann.

attempted anything wrong, I do not believe it will be at all in favour of your nephew, but for his natural children, though he had enough of his own to leave to them. I even hope that his vaunts were only to alarm your nephew and make him more economic. Yet if it hung by a point of honour, you will not wonder if I trust not to that, who found how little equity there was in a point of honour when my father died. However, you and your nephew must certainly defend your rights; and as you are both absent, pray commission me to retain counsel for you both, or do anything else in my power: you cannot have a more zealous advocate. I have been so engrossed by this idea of injustice to you, that I have yet said nothing of what you may be sure sits next to it at my heart, the assurance that this event will at last bring you over, and that we shall meet again! I flatter myself this thought delights you as much as it does me. I own it was the moment I always looked to. It was my comfort against the melancholy idea of our never meeting again. You must now come to your country—and, I trust, to your estate.

1669. TO THOMAS ASTLE.

SIR,

Dec. 19, 1775.

I am much obliged to you, and return you my thanks for the paper you have sent me. You have added a question to it, which, if I understand it, you yourself, Sir, are more capable than anybody of answering. You say, 'Is it possible that this instrument was framed by Richard Duke of Gloucester?' If by *framed* you mean drawn up, I should think Princes of the blood, in that barbarous age, were not very expert in drawing Acts of Attainder, though a branch of the law more in use then than since. But as I suppose you mean *forged*, you, Sir, so conversant in writings of that age, can judge better than any man—you may only mean

forged by his order. Your reading, much deeper than mine, may furnish you with precedents of *forged Acts of Attainder*; I never heard of one; nor does my simple understanding suggest the use of such a forgery, on cases immediately pressing; because an Act of Attainder being a matter of public notoriety, it would be revolting the common sense of all mankind to plead such an one, if it had not really existed. If it could be carried into execution by force, the force would avail without the forgery, and would be at once exaggerated and weakened by it. I cannot, therefore, conceive why Richard should make use of so absurd a trick, unless that having so little to do in so short and turbulent a reign, he amused himself with treasuring up in the Tower a forged Act for the satisfaction of those who, three hundred years afterwards, should be glad of discovering new flaws in his character. As there are men so bigoted to old legends, I am persuaded, Sir, that you would please them by communicating your question to them. They would rejoice to suppose that Richard was more criminal than even the Lancastrian historians represent him; and just at this moment I don't know whether they would not believe that Mrs. Rudd assisted him. I, who am, probably, as absurd a bigot on the other side, see nothing in the paper you have sent me, but a confirmation of Richard's innocence of the death of Clarence. As the Duke of Buckingham was appointed to superintend the execution, it is incredible that he should have been drowned in a butt of malmsey, and that Richard should have been the executioner. When a seneschal of England, or, as we call it, a Lord High Steward, is appointed for a trial, at least for execution, with all his officers, it looks very much as if, even in that age, proceedings were carried on with a little more formality than the careless writers of that time let us think. The appointment, too, of the Duke of Buckingham

for that office seems to add another improbability (and a work of supererogation) to Richard's forging the instrument. Did Richard really do nothing but what tended to increase his unpopularity by glutting mankind with lies, forgeries, and absurdities, which every man living could detect?

I take this opportunity, Sir, of telling you how sorry I am not to have seen you so long, and how glad I shall be to renew our acquaintance, especially if you like to talk over this old story with me, though I own it is of little importance, and pretty well exhausted. I am, Sir, with great regard,

Your obliged humble servant¹.

1670. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Dec. 20, 1775.

I COULD not write sooner, Madam, for though I certainly have as little real business as any Christian in England, so it happens that nobody is more employed. On Monday and Tuesday I wrote eight letters, and one of them was of seven pages; but it was a letter that I hope will save me a vast

LETTER 1669. —¹ The following queries were appended by Walpole to a copy of this letter sent by him to Cole:—

'If there was no such Parliament held, would Richard have dared to forge an Act for it?

'Would Henry VII never have reproached him with so absurd a forgery?

'Did neither Sir T. More nor Lord Bacon ever hear of that forgery?

'As Richard declared his nephew the Earl of Warwick his successor, would he have done so if he had forged an Act of Attainder of Warwick's father?

'If it is supposed he forged the Act, when he set aside Warwick,

could he pretend that Act was not known when he declared him his heir? Would not so recent an Act being unknown have proved it a forgery? And if there had been no such Parliament as that which forged it, would not that have proved it a double forgery? The Act, therefore, and the Parliament that passed it, must have been genuine, and existed, though no other record appears. The distractions of the times, the evident insufficiency or partiality of the historians of that age, and the interest of Henry VII to destroy all records that gave authority to the house of York and their title, account for our wanting evidence of that Parliament.'

many. Sir Horace Mann's elder brother is dead, the estate comes to him, and I flatter myself that a regular correspondence of thirty-four years will cease, and that I shall see him again before we meet in the Elysian fields. Antiquaries write to me too. I hoped I had done with them, but they are *still harping on my daughter*,—the old story, *Richard the Third*. I laugh at them as civilly as I can, yet they return to the charge. Then I am mighty busy about Mariette's sale, where I have been so lucky as to ruin myself. I have got Madame d'Olonne; Madame du Deffand says I have paid dearer for her than any of her lovers did in her lifetime. Item: a little bust of Nic. Poussin's wife by him in *terra cotta*, and a book of portraits in the reigns of Francis I and Henry II, that belonged to Brantôme, who has written the names; and among them is Diane de Valentinois. It is droll that even Madame d'Olonne is *en Diane*. A few days before the sale the King of France offered 300,000 livres for the whole collection: it was refused, and has not produced so much, though my correspondent, the auctioneer, says everything sold for three times what it was worth. You may imagine, Madam, I shall be in a fine taking till my old concubines arrive.

You ask me what I think of the Earl of F—— and the Irish baroness? I answer, nothing; for I don't know who they are, unless they are Lord Farnham and Lady Clermont¹; and then I shall ask why they have stayed fifty years before they thought of one another? For the other Irish baroness, Lady Luxborough, she had a mishap with Parson Dalton, the reviver of *Comus*, and retired to a hermitage on Parnassus, as she says herself. The seraphic

LETTER 1670.—¹ Frances (d. 1820), daughter of Colonel John Murray; m. (1752) William Henry Fortescue,

afterwards first Baron and Earl of Clermont.

Duchess², her friend, was suspected to have *chassé sur les mêmes terres*, and so it is no wonder they were intimate as they agreed *in eodem tertio*.

You ask me another question that I wish I could answer to my own satisfaction, and as gratefully as your Ladyship's goodness deserves: why I should not come to Ampthill this Christmas? I might plead, if I wished only for a decent excuse, that I have promised, if I go anywhere, to go to Park Place; or that Mr. Mann's death detains me, for he held our place³ for Sir Edward⁴ and me, and there is much to settle. But, alas! there is a worse reason: I am not young enough to fly about in dark cold days, and have an inward foe, whom I dare not provoke and rouse; and who, if in one of his moods, would make me as tiresome to my hosts as to myself. In one's latter days one must take care not to give one's friends anything but one's best moments, and yet, I don't know but with all my prudent maxims, I may venture to come to you for a day or two. I have a vast mind, and a colt's tooth I see the discreetest of us never sheds. Don't expect me; but Lord knows what may happen!

The newspapers, as soon as I could have done, told you what a fib the *Gazette* told about Canada on Saturday night. Faces, that are generally pretty round, lengthened to their shoe-strings on Sunday. On Monday evening the Cabinet determined to—seem to recover their spirits, and so though they believed every tittle of the intelligence, they pretend not to believe a word of it. Lady Mary Coke, who is in no secrets, declaimed on the misfortune at Princess Amelie's, and said how dreadful it was for people to fall into the hands of people who tear people's eyes out! I smiled: she

² Frances Thynne, Duchess of Somerset. Dalton acted as tutor to her son.

³ In the Custom House.

⁴ Sir Edward Walpole.

grew more incensed, and said she was sure I was glad. I said I was comforted, as I heard they put people's eyes in again; at least, I concluded so, as nobody has returned without his eyes. In good truth, I think we are pulling out our own eyes, and nobody seems to have a nostrum for putting them in again.

The Duchess cannot be tried till February, for it is recollected that Westminster Hall is a common into which all sorts of cattle must be admitted in term time. Lady Luxborough has exhausted all artful conclusions of letters, so I will never more be your Ladyship's most devoted.

P.S. They say Mrs. Rudd has been at the play in Lord Lyttelton's chariot. If the Duchess is acquitted, I suppose he will take her into keeping too, to show he is convinced of *her* virtue also, and wronged her innocence.

1671. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Dec. 21, 1775.

I SHALL make the impression of the seal to this letter as perfect as I can; yet probably it will ill answer your purpose¹, for it is only one of Wedgwood's antiques, and they are not very sharp; you exercise, I find, all your various talents, but the one I love the best *in you*. I should not say so much to everybody: a thousand pictures give me pleasure for one poem.

Foote and you agree in convicting the Duchess of ebriety, and you both prove it equally well in different ways. Nay, she seems to allow it herself, for she abandons insanity;

LETTER 1671.—¹ 'I wish in your next favour . . . you would be pleased to seal with a very clear impression of your antique sacrifice, for I have been painting from a very bad one a figure in *chiaro oscuro* for one of

my book presses, and I have succeeded so tolerably that I think it will do when finished from a better original.' (Mason to Walpole, Dec. 16, 1775.)

intends, I hear, to rest her safety on pleading guilty, lest standing on her spotless innocence should drag to light too many crimes. Lord Mansfield has added one more to his own list; his shameless protection of her.

I never heard of the imperial title you mention², nor believe it, indeed I know of no treaty. That foreign troops have been treated for is certain; if any are obtained, I am not in the secret. In the meantime the empire is shrunk to as narrow limits as that of the Holy Roman Empire; which when it had nothing left but one eagle made it into two, by splitting it, as cooks serve a pigeon. By this time Canada probably is no part of the imperial dominions; unless Lord Dunmore has transported it on board his own government and ship³, where he pretends to have imprisoned one of the provincial deputies, who to-day's papers say never existed—unless by your hypothesis of alphabetic identity, one man may become another. That many men do become other men, I see every day, and so entirely other men, that they retain none of the blushing shame of their original nymphhood, when they become butterflies.

I felt Mr. Cumberland's folly so much, that his impertinence was lost on me. He has written an Ode, as he modestly calls it, in praise of Gray's Odes; charitably no doubt to make the latter taken notice of. Garrick read it the other night at Mr. Beauclerk's, who comprehended so little what it was about, that he desired Garrick to read it backwards, and try if it would not be equally good; he did, and it was. I came in just afterwards; and the conversation continuing, Garrick said, with all the candour he could affect, 'I wonder at it, but people cry down Mr. Mason's *Life of*

² That of 'sovereign of the grand American empire.' Mason had been told that George III had so styled himself in a treaty for obtaining foreign troops to be employed in the American war.

³ The man-of-war *Fowey*, to which Lord Dunmore withdrew in June 1775, in consequence of the riots and disaffection in Virginia, where he was Governor.

Gray extremely; I really think it very ingenious.' I made him no more answer than he deserved. I broke through this rule two days ago on a new impertinence to myself. In the Paper Office there is a wight, called Thomas Astle, who lives like moths on old parchments. It was he who lent me the Coronation Roll, and to whom I communicated my book on *Richard III*, to every tittle of which he agreed. Some of the moths his *commensales* remonstrated to him I suppose, that he had fouled his own chrysalis by helping to unravel an intricate web. From that time I never saw him; on Monday he sent me a printed copy of the Act of Attainder of George, Duke of Clarence (which corroborates remarkably one of my arguments), but which he not perceiving, very impertinently added a quære, which implied I had been in the wrong. The quære itself was so absurd that I could not deny myself the pleasure of laughing at him and his council. I send you a copy of my letter⁴ as the shortest way of explaining what I have told you, and because I conclude the foolish Society of Antiquaries will be convinced he had guessed happily, and that we shall have a new dissertation against me in the next volume of the *old women's logic*, as I call the *Archæologia*. I have reserved two or three more arguments, with which they shall be treated if they do attack me again, but with which I would not trust Astle, lest any one of the body should have sense enough to see their folly and stop them. You must excuse me, but some time or other I am determined to publish all my answers. I am offended for the honour of Richard's understanding, that all they charge him with tends to represent him as a drivelling fool, though indeed such are their understandings that they mean to prove he was an able knave.

⁴ The letter to Astle already printed.

Fools! yes, I think all the world is turned fool, or was born so; *cette tête à perruque*, that wig-block the Chancellor, what do you think he has done? Burnt all his father's⁵ correspondence with Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, &c.—why do you think? because several of the letters were indiscreet. To be sure he thought they would go and publish themselves, if not burnt, but indeed I suspect the indiscretion was that there were some truths which it was not proper to preserve, considering *considerandis*. That is just what I should like to have seen. There was otherwise so much discretion, and so little of anything else except hypocrisy in all the letters of those men that have appeared, that I should not so much regret what discreet folly has now burnt. Apropos, did I ever tell you a most admirable *bon mot* of Mr. Bentley? He was talking to me of an old devout Lady St. John, who burnt a whole trunk of letters of the famous Lord Rochester, 'for which,' said Mr. Bentley, 'her soul is now burning in heaven⁶.' The oddness, confusion, and wit of the idea struck me of all things. I wish you good night.

1672. TO JOHN ROBINSON¹.

SIR,

I have but this minute received the honour of your most obliging letter, and do not lose a minute in answering it².

It is impossible to be more sensible than I am of Lord

⁵ Allen, first Earl Bathurst. The letters from Pope were not destroyed.

⁶ Lord Rochester's mother is probably the person referred to—Anne, daughter of Sir John St. John, first Baronet; m. (1) Sir Henry Lee, second Baronet, of Ditchley; (2) Henry Wilmot, Baron Wilmot, afterwards first Earl of Rochester.

LETTER 1672.—Not in C.; reprinted

from Lord Orford's *Works* (1798), vol. ii. pp. 384–5.

¹ Secretary to the Treasury.

² Robinson's letter was written in consequence of representations from the Commissioners of Customs, who were embarrassed by the absence from England of Sir Horace Mann, the successor of Edward Mann as Deputy Collector of Customs Inwards.

North's goodness, and I must beg you, Sir, to express my gratitude to his Lordship, as I shall have the honour of doing in person. His Lordship's condescension to me is as flattering as unmerited; and the only way I can at all pretend to deserve it is by doing what I ought; that is, as far as the case regards myself, prefer the public service to myself, and submit myself in the care of that interest to his Lordship's wisdom: at the same time having so just a sense of the duty of gratitude, that I think myself equally obliged by a kind offer, whether accepted or declined.

The Collectorship of the Customs is an office of such importance, that my family or I, who have received such favours from the government, ought to be the first to take care that the public suffers no detriment in an office in which we are concerned. I, it is true, have a great, though a temporary, interest in that office, but it is my brother, Sir Edward, in whom it is vested for his life; and therefore I flatter myself that both Lord North and you, Sir, will consider my answer as only regarding myself; for though I am persuaded that my brother has the public service full as much at heart as I have, I must not take upon me to answer for him about an office that virtually and ultimately rests in him. For myself I am persuaded that I cannot serve the public more essentially than by waiving my own interest entirely, and referring the whole disposition of the present difficulty to Lord North's discretion, and submitting myself entirely to what he shall direct. The situation of the office by the absence of Sir Horace Mann is certainly extremely momentous, and ought not to remain precarious; therefore, I beg very respectfully and gratefully too, that I may not be considered for an instant, but that his Lordship will give orders for the security of the office in whatever manner he thinks fit, till Sir Horace can come over and

accept it; and whatever his Lordship shall determine will be cheerfully acquiesced in by,

Sir,

His Lordship's and your most grateful

And most obedient humble servant,

Arlington Street, Dec. 25, 1775.

HORACE WALPOLE.

POSTSCRIPT.

SIR,

I was so convinced that my brother Sir Edward prefers the service of the public to his own interest, at least as much as I do, that I deferred sending my immediate answer till I had communicated it to my brother; and he authorizes me to say that he submits himself entirely to Lord North's arbitration for the safety of the office till Sir Horace Mann can be admitted to it according to the intention of the patent.

1673. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 26, 1775.

It was very vexatious to be delivered from my own anxiety about you on Saturday last, and not to be able to remove your suspense till Tuesday. I hope, however, that the conclusion of my last week's letter diminished your apprehensions of being wronged. I now confirm you in, and invest you with, your own estate. If your good-natured mind chooses to thank your brother for it, you may—for my part I don't believe a word of his having had power to deprive you of it—unless by some dishonourable flaw, which a generous mind would not think gives power. If he has done you justice, there is not a grain of benevolence thrown into the scale; for having (I don't know what he calls) laid out six thousand pounds on the estate, he leaves you charged with two hundred and sixty pounds annuity in

lieu of it. When one makes use of such a fraction of power, I do not much believe in the greatness of mind that resisted a greater temptation. Well, Linton is yours, and you are now your own master; I say nothing of particulars; there are few, and Mr. Croft¹ tells you them. Your nephew Sir Horace is not named in the will; the daughter was the object, and during her mother's life will have more than her brother. Croft thinks they will have 35,000*l.* apiece; I should think more. He calls your estate 1,500*l.* a year; I hope it is more; at least by an old rent roll made thirty years ago, it was then 1,200*l.* a year, and probably has risen or been increased above a fourth since that.

If you have been impatient for this letter, how anxious must I be too for your answer to my last! But you cannot hesitate to take possession of your estate, to see your country again after an absence of forty years, to see a sister you love, and friends I think you love too. Why do I doubt? I will not—I will flatter myself that you will fix here. Such long, faithful, and laborious services as yours cannot remain unrewarded. Sir James Porter², not so ancient a servant as you, has a pension of 1,000*l.* a year. Lord Sandwich and Mr. Mackenzie have always been your protectors; and if you have not made many other friends, never were amiable qualities so thrown away for forty years together—but what the deuce am I doing! Why do I doubt your coming?

Since I wrote last, public affairs are grown much more serious, and unpromising of any good issue. General Carleton has been beaten by the provincials³, St. John's has surrendered to them, Quebec has probably⁴ fallen into their hands, with the whole province of Canada. You may

LETTER 1673.—¹ The solicitor employed. *Walpole.*

² Who had been minister at Constantinople. *Walpole.*

³ General Carleton had failed in

an attempt to relieve St. John's, which capitulated on Nov. 3, 1775.

⁴ The Americans laid siege to Quebec in December, but it was not taken by them.

call your neighbour the Pope an ungrateful old whore, for the Canadians joined the provincials. All this is certain; the rest seems to be credited; that our ships are destroying all the towns on the coast. This is horrible! and that the King's army could not stay in Boston, but was meditating retreat to Halifax. I don't at all warrant the last article of the bill of fare; but I may well say I see no prospect of good. Seeds of the last inveteracy sown! a whole continent to be reconquered! What lives, what money to be squandered! What damages, what breaches to be repaired! And reconciliation, how to be effected? by victories on our side, or on theirs? France is straining every nerve to repair their losses; we, every one to weaken ourselves; and weak we are to such a degree, that I hope France does not know it. Come and see us before it is worse.

The King referred to the Attorney-General the Duchess of Kingston's petition for a *noli prosequi*, and it was argued at the chambers of the Attorney. How many counsel do you think she had retained for that single preliminary?—a mob—only fourteen. She must be in a mortal panic; and the *noli prosequi* will not be granted. She has resumed her senses. The trial is fixed for the end of February. Madam of Babylon⁵ and her Canadians are not in good odour; nay, I should not wonder if, like Jane Shore's friend Mrs. Blagrove, the old harlot should appropriate the entrusted jewels to her own use, when the Duchess is standing in a white sheet.

My last letter was so voluminous that it must compensate for this. How I long to have our correspondence finish! Your next, I conclude, will mention the passage of the Duke and Duchess⁶ through Florence. Adieu!

⁵ The Pope, in whose custody the Duchess of Kingston was said to have left her valuable effects at Rome. *Walpole*.

⁶ Of Gloucester. *Walpole*.

1674. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Dec. 27, 1775.

FRESH, very fresh news! General Carleton is not come, but General Burgoyne is, though not yet landed in town. He is to bring very good accounts from Boston; but as he does not yet know what till he is told by those he is to tell, and as I am too scrupulous to send any news before it is born, you will excuse my mentioning the particulars.

We believe Quebec is perfectly safe, though we know to the contrary. Adam Smith told us t'other night at Beauclerk's, that Major Preston, one of two, but he is not sure which, would have been an excellent commander some years hence if he had seen any service. I said it was pity the war had not been put off till the Major should be some years older.

Lord Granby was married last night. He is selling an estate of 3,000*l.* a year that came to him by his mother¹, to pay his father's debts. I am afraid he will never sell himself.

Here are some verses of Soame Jenyns, that, in our present want of comfort, we admire very much, for we are out of spirits, and so was the poet, too, when he wrote the last stanza, which is insufferably bad. Pray return the piece, for I have no copy, and my amanuensis is in the country. There are some better verses² by Dean Barnard³, of which I will procure a copy if I can. They are an answer to a gross brutality of Dr. Johnson, to which a properer answer would have been to fling a glass of wine in his face. I have

LETTER 1674.—¹ His mother was a daughter of the 'proud' Duke of Somerset, and his father the popular Marquis of Granby.

² The verses do not appear. They are to be found in Dr. Birkbeck

Hill's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, vol. iv. pp. 431-3, App. A.

³ Thomas Barnard, D.D. (1728-1806), Dean of Derry, 1769-80; Bishop of Killaloe, 1780-94; Bishop of Limerick, 1794-1806.

no patience with an unfortunate monster trusting to his helpless deformity for indemnity for any impertinence that his arrogance suggests, and who thinks that what he has read is an excuse for everything he says.

I told you, Madam, I might be busy if I would. I am so whether I will or not. The absence of Sir Horace Mann has embarrassed me, as he is not here to be admitted to the place which his brother held by patent for my brother and me. It involves me with the Treasury, but as I am the most respectful and cheapest person they can deal with, I have submitted everything to them, and only begged they will give me nothing for my pains,—which will content me at least. I shall go to Strawberry to-morrow, unless I hear their pleasure; and have told Mr. Fitzpatrick that I think of meeting him next week at Ampthill; but I don't tell your Ladyship so, for indeed I know nothing of the matter.

Just at present I suppose I am the vainest creature in the universe. Lady Di has drawn three scenes of my tragedy, which if the subject were a quarter as good as the drawings, would make me a greater genius than Shakespeare, as she is superior to Guido and Salvator Rosa. Such figures! such dignity! such simplicity! Then there is a cedar hanging over the castle, that is more romantic than when it grew on Lebanon!

Oh, if Lord Ossory has a farthing in the world to spare, he may buy a Madonna and Child, by Vandyke, at Christie's, for four thousand guineas, for which I would not give four hundred if I were as rich as General Scott. It is a fine picture, and yet I believe Vandyke was the father no more than Joseph.

1675. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

You must come to your friends; you cannot care for foolish Florentines, and weary you must be of travelling boys and their hoggish governors. Your sister Mrs. Foote is most amiable; Mr. Foote is good and reasonable; you like your nephew and Lady Lucy—here are relations and family for you, and I will think you wish to see *me*. The journey (not till winter is gone) will do you good; and if the climate should not equal that of Italy, you can but return. Come you must; it is impossible you should hesitate.

I shall go to Mr. Croft to-morrow, and if it is possible get him to send me an account of the will on Thursday, that I may receive it on Friday in time to write to you that night; though perhaps it may not be opened early enough on Thursday for him to save the post. If you do not hear from me till by Tuesday's post, you will conclude it was out of my power; and you must bear this suspense as calmly as you can. I would not have written under so much uncertainty, if your brother's death had not already appeared in the papers; and I would not fail to tell you as early as anybody.

I began my letter with trifling news, and have suffered you to read three pages of it, though an event of such importance awaited you. I will finish with public news more serious than the adventures of the Duchess-Countess.

The ministers received an account last night from Governor Tryon, that the provincials under Montgomery

LETTER 1675.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave. At the beginning of the letter is the following note in Horace Walpole's writing:—

'The following was part of the fore-going [the letter to Mann of Dec. 26, 1775], but may be reckoned a new letter, though by mistake I had thought a first part wanting.'

had entirely defeated General Carleton, cut to pieces all his Highlanders, and some say have taken the General himself¹. Montgomery then summoned the commander of St. John's to surrender that place, as it would be in vain to hold out. The commander believed him and gave it up. It is supposed that Montreal and Quebec will soon follow. This is a great blow and will not be compensated by Lord Dunmore's having seized one of the deputies of the Congress, taken some old privateer cannon, and put to flight 200 provincials, he having but eighty men. However, a body of people, calling themselves Regulators, in Carolina, who are at war with the provincial governments, have promised assistance, if any of the King's forces make a descent. This I believe is a great motive to an armament going hence in two or three days to Virginia under Lord Cornwallis. I, who am no very good judge, have always thought the American war would be of long duration; and if 200 *have* run away, the army besieging Boston and the body under Montgomery (an Irishman) have shown some spirit. A new bill now passing for destroying their ships will add new fuel to their rage; and the commissioners for treating of peace, who are still talked of, will not find their minds in good temper, when provoked on one hand, and victorious on the other. How happy for us, that other countries allow us to prosecute our own quarrels at our ease!

I revert to you and your affairs, my dear Sir; they are uppermost in my thoughts—yet there is so much selfishness in them, that I have but half merit in being impatient to send you the best news. I never named it to you, because it was not right or decent, but your brother was never very ill, without my indulging a secret hope of seeing you again. It is one in the morning, and I

¹ That part did not prove true. *Walpole.*

must go to bed, but I shall certainly dream you are come.

Tuesday, 3 o'clock.

I have been with Mr. Croft, and he has given me great satisfaction, though the will will not be opened till Friday morning, as your sister has summoned your nieces and their husbands to be present. I hinted darkly at your late brother having had some notion of the estate being in his power—‘Oh, Sir,’ said Mr. Croft, ‘Mr. Mann was a prodigious honest man, and would not do anything wrong: he told me he could cut off the entail, but he would not, as it seemed to be his father’s intention that it should go according to the entail’—to be sure he did; but I said nothing: I saw Mr. Croft did not understand the case, and I did not want to furnish an executor with any ill-founded difficulty. I begged he would write me a line as soon as he could—‘Sir,’ said he again, ‘I dare to say Mr. Mann has given everything of his own, except a few legacies, to his two children; indeed I advised him to it, especially to the young lady, who is very deserving.’ ‘Sir,’ replied I, ‘I do not desire to know any particulars but about the estate, which I wish to be certain is to go to the two Sir Horaces. I have nothing to say against anything else that Mr. Mann may have thought proper to give to his children. I have always thought that when people have brought children into the world, they ought to make them as happy as they can, especially natural children, on whom they have heaped disadvantages.’ ‘You may depend upon it,’ said Mr. Croft, ‘that the entail is not cut off.’—Still I shall not be completely satisfied, my dear Sir, till I know it is yours without any trouble. You will smile perhaps at my suspicion, but as the boy is unhealthy, I conclude Mr. Croft intends to marry the girl to some relation of his own. This is only between you

and me; all the rest you may communicate to your nephew. Adieu! my mind is much more at ease than it was.

1676. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Jan. 26, 1776.

I HAVE deferred answering your last letter, dear Sir, till I cannot answer with my own hand. I made a pilgrimage at Christmas to Queen's Cross, at Amptill, was caught there by the snow, imprisoned there for a fortnight, and sent home bound hand and foot by the gout. The pain, I suppose, is quite frozen, for I have had none; nothing but inflammation and swelling, and they abate. In reality, this is owing to the bootikins, which, though they do not cure the gout, take out its sting. You, who are still more apt to be an invalid, feel, I fear, this hyperborean season; I should be glad to hear you did not.

I thought I had at once jumped upon a discovery of the subject of the painted room at the Rose Tavern, but shall not plume myself upon my luck till I have seen the chamber, because Mr. Gough's account seems to date the style of the painting earlier than will serve my hypothesis. I had no data to go upon but the site having belonged to the family of Tufton (for I do not think the description at all answers to the taking of Francis I, nor is it at all credible that there should be arms in the painting, and yet neither those of France or Austria). I turned immediately to Lord Thanet's pedigree, in Collins's *Peerage*, and found at once an heroic adventure performed by one of the family¹, that accords remarkably with the principal circumstance. It is the rescue of the Elector Palatine,

LETTER 1676. — ¹ Hon. George Tufton, sixth son of second Earl of Thanet. He died in 1670 from

wounds received in the encounter mentioned by Walpole.

son of our Queen of Bohemia, from an ambuscade laid for him by the Duke of Lorrain. The arms, or and gules, I thought were those of Lorrain, which I since find are argent and gules. The argent indeed may be turned yellow by age, as Mr. Gough says he does not know whether the crescent is red or black. But the great impediment is, that this achievement of a Tufton was performed in the reign of Charles II. Now in that reign, when we were become singularly ignorant of chivalry, anachronisms and blunders might easily be committed by a modern painter, yet I shall not adhere to my discovery, unless I find the painting correspond with the style of the modern time to which I would assign it; nor will I see through the eyes of my hypothesis, but fairly.

I shall now turn to another subject. Mr. Astle, who has left me off ever since the fatal era of Richard III, for no reason that I can conceive but my having adopted his discovery, which, for aught I know may be a reason with an antiquary, lately sent me the attainder of George, Duke of Clarence, which he has found in the Tower and printed; and on it, as rather glad to confute me and himself, than to have found a curiosity, he had written two or three queries which tended to accuse Richard of having forged the instrument, though to the instrument itself is added another, which confirms my acquittal of Richard of the murder of Clarence—but, alas! passion is a spying-glass that does but make the eyes of folly more blind. I sent him an answer, a copy of which I enclose. Since that, I have heard no more of him, nor shall, I suppose, till I see this new proof of Richard's guilt adopted into the annals of the Society, against which I have reserved some other stigmas for it.

Mr. Edmonson has found a confirmation of Isabella Fitz-Osbert having married Jernegan after Walpole. I

forget where I found my arms of Fitz-Osbert. Though they differ from yours of Sir Roger, the colours are the same, and they agree with yours of William Fitz-Osborne. There was no accuracy in spelling names even till much later ages ; and you know that different branches of the same family made little variation in their coats.

I am very sorry for the death of poor Henshaw², of which I had not heard. I am yours most sincerely,

H. W.

P.S. The queries added to the letter to Mr. Astle were not sent with it ; and, as I reserve them for a future answer, I beg you will show them to nobody.

1677. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Jan. 28, 1776.

I AM in so much haste now to have our correspondence end, that I no longer love even to write you a letter. My impatience to hear that you think of coming over is extreme—think of it !—I mean, to hear that you have fixed the time. Surely you can think of nothing else. Old Knight, the cashier¹, used to come once a year to Calais to look at the cliffs of England. You are not banished, as he was, but have been much longer absent. I will forgive any imprudence of impetuosity to come ; take care I hear of no coldness. I am almost afraid to frighten you with an account of our winter ; but then it is such a winter as I never saw. I was with you at Florence in 1741, and those ever since have been springs, and sometimes summers. This was made for the North Pole, has lasted three weeks,

² A young engraver.

LETTER 1677.—¹ Robert Knight, cashier of the South Sea Company in the memorable year 1720. His

son was created Lord Luxborough, and afterwards Earl of Catherlogh, and had an only son, who died before him, without issue. *Walpole*.

and grows every day worse and worse. It caught me at Lord Ossory's², in Bedfordshire, and locked me up there above a fortnight. At last it gave me the gout in both hands, on which I set out directly for London through mountains of snow and quarries of ice. I am still confined, though I have had very little pain; yet I write with difficulty, and ill-humour too, for I expected no gout this year.

By your silence, though you mention them at Rome, I find their Royal Highnesses my nephew and niece did not pass through Florence, for which I am not sorry. I have had a letter from the Duchess, who tells me the Pope has been a perfect knight-errant in courtesy and gallantry, and enjoined all manner of attentions to them from his college and nobility. It is not he that sent it to me, but I have had a red hat given to me to-day—it was Cardinal Wolsey's³. I am impatient to hear the result of Lady Orford's audience. I did not imagine she would ask it, as she was not content with the Duke⁴ when he was last at Florence: I suppose she is proud of her *nepotism*.

The trial of the late Pope's friend, the Duchess of Kingston, is put off till April.

The government is straining every nerve to muster a great army in America, though it must combat for its very landing. Fifteen thousand Hessians and Brunswickers are retained. This force, if half of it can get thither and land, must be maintained from hence. We are not apt to be frugal about our armies abroad. Guess at the millions this will cost; and come and see your country before all its

² Ampthill. *Walpole*.

³ 'The red hat of Cardinal Wolsey, found in the Great Wardrobe by Bishop Burnet when Clerk of the Closet. From his son the judge it came to the Countess Dowager of

Albemarle, who gave it to Mr. Walpole.' (See *Description of Strawberry Hill*.)

⁴ The Duke of Gloucester. *Walpole*.

splendour is at an end! Boston is famishing: what is the fate of Quebec, we do not yet know. The Parliament is met, but two-thirds of the members are frozen in the country. Omiah, the native of Otaheite, breakfasted with Mr. Conway to-day, and learns to skate. He had no notion of ice, and calls it *stone-water*; a very good expression. If he was in Ireland they would advise him to carry over some in spirits.

Shall you bring over a great many fine things for Linton? Shall you not regret all you have given to me? I would give them up to have you here. Don't you invite me to Linton? How long your letter is coming! Take care to know me when you see me. Expect me as wrinkled as Methuselem. Pray don't impute the change to thirty-five years and a tolerable quantity of gout, but to this hard winter. I assure you I looked charmingly a month ago. I have some spirits left still, and I wish I don't behave like a boy when we meet.

1678. TO EDWARD GIBBON¹.

MR. WALPOLE cannot express how much he is obliged to Mr. Gibbon for the valuable present he has received²; nor how great a comfort it is to him in his present situation, in which he little expected to receive singular pleasure. Mr. Walpole does not say this at random, nor from mere confidence in the author's abilities, for he has already (all his weakness would permit) read the first chapter, and it is in the greatest admiration of the style, manner, method, clearness, and intelligence. Mr. Walpole's impatience to proceed will struggle with his disorder, and give him such

LETTER 1678.—¹ Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), the historian.

² The first volume of the *History*

of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

spirits, that he flatters himself he shall owe part of his recovery to Mr. Gibbon; whom, as soon as that is a little effected, he shall beg the honour of seeing.

1679. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

DEAR SIR,

Arlington Street, Feb. 6.

I send you word as soon as I can that I received your charming letter very safely, but that is all I can do or say; and God knows when I shall be able to send you any other answer, for I am, and have been this week, confined to my bed with the gout in six or seven different places. As I never had it before in my leap year, I would suppose that it is owing now to the late bitter weather, for you see that even in my condition one can be fool enough to flatter oneself with some straw to the last. Adieu! I heartily wish you all I want, without envying you what I want.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1680. TO EDWARD GIBBON.

Feb. 14, 1776.

AFTER the singular pleasure of reading you, Sir, the next satisfaction is to declare my admiration. I have read great part of your volume, and cannot decide to which of its various merits I give the preference, though I have no doubt of assigning my partiality to one virtue of the author, which, seldom as I meet with it, always strikes me superiorly. Its quality will naturally prevent your guessing which I mean. It is your amiable modesty. How can you know so much, judge so well, possess your subject, and your knowledge, and your power of judicious reflection so thoroughly, and yet command yourself and betray no dictatorial arrogance of decision? How unlike

very ancient and very modern authors! You have, unexpectedly, given the world a classic history. The fame it must acquire will tend every day to acquit this panegyric of flattery. The impressions it has made on me are very numerous. The strongest is the thirst of being better acquainted with you; but I reflect that I have been a trifling author, and am in no light profound enough to deserve your intimacy, except by confessing your superiority so frankly, that I assure you honestly I already feel no envy, though I did for a moment. The best proof I can give you of my sincerity is to exhort you, warmly and earnestly, to go on with your noble work: the strongest, though a presumptuous mark of my friendship, is to warn you never to let your charming modesty be corrupted by the acclamations your talents will receive. The native qualities of the man should never be sacrificed to those of the author, however shining. I take this liberty as an older man, which reminds me how little I dare promise myself that I shall see your work completed! But I love posterity enough to contribute, if I can, to give them pleasure through you.

I am too weak to say more, though I could talk for hours on your *History*. But one feeling I cannot suppress, though it is a sensation of vanity. I think, nay, I am sure I perceive, that your sentiments on government agree with my own. It is the only point on which I suspect myself of any partiality in my admiration. It is a reflection of a far inferior vanity that pleases me in your speaking with so much distinction of that, alas! wonderful period, in which the world saw five good monarchs succeed each other. I have often thought of treating that Elysian era. Happily it has fallen into better hands!

I have been able to rise to-day for the first time, and flatter myself that if I have no relapse, you will in two or

three days more give me leave, Sir, to ask the honour of seeing you. In the meantime, be just; and do not suspect me of flattering you. You will always hear that I say the same of you to everybody. I am, with the greatest regard, Sir, &c.

1681. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 15, 1776.

You have chilled me so thoroughly by the coldness of your answer, and by the dislike you express to England, that I shall certainly press you no more to come. I thought at least it would have cost you a struggle.

Your late brother, I allow, has used you very ill, and I dare to say, beyond his power. It is not at all probable that a tenant for life should have had power to charge the estate with what he laid out on the mansion house. His personal estate would be chargeable if he had let it go to ruin. If he improved it, it was at his own risk. Your nephew, whom you have prudently and kindly associated with yourself, will certainly take good advice for you and himself when he returns. I can say nothing on your brother Edward's first appanage, of which he has disposed; that must depend on the deeds executed by your father, when he assigned it. For the American estate, this is the first time I ever heard of it, and cannot judge.

Another part of your letter hurt me too very much. You say, even your brother Gal never did you any pecuniary service. Forgive me, but I had heard and believed that he had increased, at least managed so advantageously what money of yours he had in his hands, that at his death it amounted to seventeen thousand pounds, which I confess seemed to me more than you with your generosity could have saved out of your appointments. For the indifference of the rest of your family I heartily condemn it; but you

will not wonder that I combat for dear Gal's tenderness; and I will still hope that the insensibility of your last brother had given you a moment of humour, that I am sure did not last.

I must now speak on another subject, on which I have acted so disinterestedly for myself, and with such perfect regard for you, that I do not fear your imputing to the smallest personal concern the warm manner in which I pressed you to return instantly on your brother's death. Indeed I had not had time to know that your return would have been convenient to me: I wrote from my feelings, and had not another thought but the joy of seeing you once more—a thought I resign with infinite reluctance; though, as you will find by what I am going to say, your personal appearance is no longer necessary but to the satisfaction of my friendship.

Your late brother held for me and my brother our place in the Custom House; as you succeed to all his rights, the patent falls to you and is held in your name. The Commissioners of the Customs represented against your absence, and I was desired to give you notice. I peremptorily refused. I said I had acquainted you with your brother's death, and had pressed you to come over; but as I apprehended (as you saw) that you might plead your age, the fatigue of the journey, and change of climate, I was determined to await your answer, and nothing should induce me to urge you to come if you did not think it safe for your health. In the meantime, as the office could not stand still, Lord North very obligingly offered me to settle a deputation in any manner I should propose. That, too, I declined, and submitted the whole disposition to his Lordship's discretion. In one word, the Treasury have appointed Mr. Suckling, our cousin and deputy, to act for you till you come; which will be as long as you live,

unless Sir Edward dies first, when the patent expires—so that now you have no call, nor would your presence be the least necessary to my interest. I only believe that it will be necessary to demand your consent to this arrangement; and that is all the trouble you will have.

I have kept my bed for a fortnight with the gout in my limbs, and yesterday was the first of my rising; but it was after a sleep of eleven hours, which shows how excellent my constitution would be, if not harassed by the gout. I bear that affliction with patience—with patience, which my reflection has taught me is *the desperate substitute to hope*, and which does not delude one with such charming visions!

The Duke of Gloucester did me the honour of notifying to me the birth of his son¹. It was most welcome intelligence, and saved me a month's anxiety for the Duchess, who I thought was likely to go a fortnight longer.

We have no news but those of preparations against America. I can add nothing to what you know I think on that subject.

Monsieur de Guisnes has been suddenly recalled—it is said on a successful cabal of his enemies; which, if so, bodes his total ruin. As his successor is not appointed, and there is a great armament at Toulon (though said to assist the Spaniards against Algiers), the stocks took fright, and expressed it: I don't know whether with reason; but can their panic be extremely premature? There is talk of Lord Stormont leaving his embassy for a post in Scotland, and of Sir Joseph Yorke replacing him at Paris.

Lady Mary Coke has returned some services at Paris, and many years of great attentions, with singular rudeness to me, since my return—but she is mad; and I suppose the birth of the Prince at Rome will send her to Bedlam².

LETTER 1681.—¹ Prince William Frederick (d. 1834); he succeeded his father as Duke of Gloucester

in 1805.

² Lady Mary Coke had hoped to marry Edward, Duke of York, and

I think I have heard of the life of a modern visionary called *Marie à la Coque*³, who fancied herself married to Jesus Christ; it would make a good parallel. Adieu! The accounts from Rome continue good.

1682. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Feb. 18, 1776.

As my illness prevented my answering your delightful letter, I do not see why the leisure and solitude of convalescence should not be employed in replying to it; not poetically, for the current of the blood, frozen by age and chalkstoned by the gout, does not, though loosened from disease, flow over the smooth pebbles of Helicon. Mine, at best, were factitious rills that, like the artificial cascades of Hagley, played for moments to entertain visitors, and were not the natural bounty of the soil. *You* are forced to restrain your torrent, and the dykes of prudence must be borne down before it overflows the country. Not so Mr. Anstey; because his muddy mill-pool had in one point of view the roar and lustre of a cascade when it fell over a proper wheel, he thinks every painful of its water, though soused down by a ploughman, has the same effect. His *Somersetshire Dialogue* is stupidity itself; you described it prophetically before you saw it.

Somebody or other has given us an epistle of another kind by the late Lord Melcombe;—not different from having more meaning, for Phœbus knows it has none at all, but so civil, so harmless, and so harmonious, that it is the ghost of one of Pope's tunes. How the puffy peer

hated the Duchess of Gloucester for having been more successful. On the death of the Duke of York, she tried ridiculously to make it believed that she had been married to him,

but equally in vain. *Walpole*.

³ Marguerite or Marie Alacoque (1647–1690), a nun of the order of the Visitation.

must have sweated when learning to sing of Pope, whom he could have strangled! The whole and sole drift of this cantata is to call Lord Bute 'Pollio,' and to beg to be his vicegerent upon earth. I should like to have heard Lord Bute asking Sir Harry Erskine who 'Pollio' was.

Mr. Whitehead has just published a pretty poem called *Variety*, in which there is humour and ingenuity, but not more poetry than is necessary for a Laureate; however, the plan is one, and is well wound up. I now pass to prose.

Lo, there is just appeared a truly classic work: a history, not majestic like Livy, nor compressed like Tacitus; not stamped with character like Clarendon; perhaps not so deep as Robertson's *Scotland*, but a thousand degrees above his *Charles*; not pointed like Voltaire, but as accurate as he is inexact; modest as he is *tranchant* and sly as Montesquieu without being so *recherché*. The style is as smooth as a Flemish picture, and the muscles are concealed and only for natural uses, not exaggerated like Michael Angelo's to show the painter's skill in anatomy; nor composed of the limbs of clowns of different nations, like Dr. Johnson's heterogeneous monsters. This book is Mr. Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He is son of a foolish alderman, is a member of Parliament, and called a whimsical one because he votes variously as his opinion leads him; and his first production was in French¹, in which language he shines too. I know him a little, never suspected the extent of his talents, for he is perfectly modest, or I want penetration, which I know too, but I intend to know him a great deal more—there! there is food for your residence at York.

Do I know nothing superior to Mr. Gibbon? yes, but not

LETTER 1682.—¹ *Essai sur l'Étude de la Littérature*, begun in 1758, and finished in the following year.

what will entertain you at York; Mr. Gibbon's are good sense and polished art. I talk of great original genius. Lady Di Beauclerk has made seven large drawings in sut-water (her first attempt of the kind) for scenes of my *Mysterious Mother*. Oh, such drawings! Guido's grace, Albano's children, Poussin's expression, Salvator's boldness in landscape, and Andrea Sacchi's simplicity of composition might perhaps have equalled them had they wrought all together very fine. How an author's vanity can bestow bombast panegyric on his flatterers! Pray, Sir, when did I take myself for an original genius! Did not Shakespeare draw Hamlet from Olaus Ostrogothus, or some such name; did Le Sœur conceive the Chartreuse from any merit in the legend of St. Bruno? Seeing is believing, miracles are not ceased. I know how prejudiced I am apt to be; some time or other you will see whether I am so in this instance.

Now for specific answers to your queries; many of which answers will not be specific, for I know little more than if I were at York. I know nothing of Garrick's sale of patent, but I know forty stories of his envy and jealousy that are too long to tell you by mouth of pen; of a Monsr. le Texier, another real prodigy, who acts whole plays, in which every character is perfect—and pray observe he has not read *my* play. In sum, Garrick says when he quits the stage, he will read plays too, but they will be better than Monsr. Texier's (who only reads those of other authors), for he shall write them himself. This I know he has said twice. *Ex pede Herculem*. The Duchess of Kingston only knows whether she will be tried. The Earl's zeal against her was as marvellous to me as to you; I know reasons why he should have done the reverse, and cannot reconcile contradictions. Why should not Sayer's affair sleep? what, who is awake? For your hundred other queries which you have not put to



Lady Craven
from the painting by George Romney R.A.

me, I shall not attempt to guess them, not from idleness, but from the probable incapacity of my being able to answer them. The womb of time is big; we shall see whether she is delivered of mice or mountains.

One word about myself, and I have done. I know you disliked my answer to Dr. Milles², and I know I was angry both at him and Mr. Hume. The latter had acted very treacherously by the story I have hinted at of the Swiss reviewer³. Dr. Milles is a fool, who had been set on by Lord Hardwicke and that set, and at whom I have glanced. I have received many indirect little mischiefs from the Earl, who has of late courted me as much, and I have been civil to him. But my answers shall some time or other appear, when I only shall be blamed and my antagonists will be dead, and not hurt by them. For Mr. Masters, he is a dirty simpleton, who began by flattering me, and because I neglected him, joined the pack. The arguments in the answers are very essential to the question, and I shall not give myself the trouble of extracting the ridicule on the answerers, as they deserved it.

My hands you see are well, but I could not have written so long an epistle with my feet, which are still in their flannels. As my spirits always revive in proportion as pain subsides, I shall take the liberty (Sir Residentiary) to trespass on your decorum by sending you an impromptu I wrote yesterday, to pretty Lady Craven, who sent me an eclogue of her own, every stanza of which ended with *January*, and which she desired me not to criticize, as some

² See note on letter to Cole of Dec. 20, 1770.

³ M. Deyverdun, a Swiss employed in the office of the Secretary of State, and a friend of Gibbon. He reviewed the *Historic Doubts* in *Mémoires Littéraires de la Grande Bretagne*. To this article were appended some remarks

of Hume's on the same subject. These had already been submitted to and condemned by Horace Walpole, who objected to their publication and to the use made of them by the reviewer. (See Horace Walpole's *Short Notes of my Life*, under date of May 1769.)

of the rhymes were incorrect, a licence I adopted in my second line:

Though lame and old, I do not burn
 With fretfulness to scare ye;
 And charms and wit like yours would turn
 To May my January.
 The God who can inspire and heal
 Sure breathed your lines, sweet Fairy,
 For as I read, I feel, I feel,
 I'm not quite January.

Probably you would have liked better to have the eclogue, but I had not leave to send it.

1683. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Feb. 29, 1776.

My confinement has made me a great devourer of quartos. I am impatient to tell you what I have found in one as large as Mr. Gibbon's, not quite so excellent a work, nor so compressed, but which is not barren of entertainment, though the first sections to be sure are to me absolute Hebrew. This is Dr. Burney's¹ *History of Music*, a volume that I fear will a little interfere with my friend Sir John Hawkins's on the same subject.

I must begin with telling you that in page 168 the Doctor says he holds it impossible to be a great poet and a great musician too. Now, not to mention Gray, who (I believe, though I know nothing of music) was a great musician, how could he forget you whom he has not forgotten? for he has celebrated your harmonic knowledge in his notes, though I perceive he did not know that you are an *inventor* in the science, and have begotten a new instrument by the marriage of two others:—but to the point.

LETTER 1683.—¹ Dr. Charles Burney (1726-1814).

Would you believe that the great Abyssinian, Mr. Bruce, whom Dr. B. made me laugh by seriously calling the *intrepid traveller*, has had the intrepidity to write a letter to the Doctor, which the latter has printed in his book; and in which he intrepidly tells lies of almost as large a magnitude as his story of the bramble, into which his Majesty of Abyssinia and his whole army were led by the fault of his general, and which bramble was so tenacious, that his Majesty could not disentangle himself without stripping to the skin and leaving his robes in it, and it being death in that country to procure or compass the sovereign's nudity, the general lost his head for the error of his march.

In short, Mr. Bruce has not only described six Abyssinian musical instruments, and given their names in the ancient Ethiopic, and in the court language, but contributed a Theban harp, as beautifully and gracefully designed as if Mr. Adam had drawn it for Lady Mansfield's² dressing-room, with a sphinx, masts, a patera, and a running foliage of leaves. This harp, Mr. Bruce says, he copied from a painting in fresco on the inside of a cavern near the ancient Thebes, and that it was painted there by the order of Sesostris, and he is not at all astonished at the miracle of its preservation, though he treats poor accurate Dr. Pococke with great contempt for having been in the cave without seeing this prodigy, which, however, graceful as its form is, Mr. Bruce thinks, was not executed by any artist superior to a sign-painter, yet so high was the perfection of the arts in the time of *Sesac*, that a common mechanic could not help rendering faithfully a common instrument. I am sorry our Apelles, Sir Joshua, has not the sign-

² Lady Elizabeth Finch (d. 1784), sixth daughter of sixth Earl of Winchelsea; m. (1738) Hon. William Murray, afterwards Earl of Mans-

field, whose house, Caenwood, near Hampstead, was designed by the brothers Robert and James Adam.

painter's secret of making his colours last in an open cave for thousands of years.

It is unlucky that Mr. Bruce does not possess another secret reckoned very essential to intrepid travellers—a good memory. Last spring he dined at Mr. Crawford's: George Selwyn was one of the company. After relating the story of the bramble, and several other curious particulars, somebody asked Mr. Bruce if the Abyssinians had any musical instruments? 'Musical instruments!' said he, and paused—'yes, I think I remember one—lyre.' George Selwyn whispered his neighbour, 'I am sure there is one less since he came out of the country.' There are now six instruments there.

Remember this letter is only for your own private eye; I do not desire to be engaged in a controversy or a duel.

My gout is waning, and my ambition looks down to getting on a shoe in a few days. Mr. Stonhewer called on me yesterday, and I diverted him with what had just happened. Mr. Cambridge had been with me, and asked me if I knew the famous Beaumarchais³, who is in England. I said, 'No, Sir, nor ever intend it.' 'Well, now,' said he, 'that is exactly my way: I made a resolution early never to be acquainted with authors, they are so vain and so *troublesome*.' I am persuaded he has got acquainted with Beaumarchais by this time. Adieu!

P.S. When you read Dr. Burney, pray observe in p. 256, in the notes, a quotation from Huet that exactly describes Bryant's *Ancient Mythology*.

³ Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-1799).

1684. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, March 1, 1776.

I AM sorry to tell you that the curious old painting at the tavern in Fleet Street is addled, by the subject turning out a little too old. Alas! it is not the story of Francis I—but of St. Paul. All the coats of arms that should have been French and Austrian, and that I had a mind to convert into Palatine and Lorrain, are the bearings of Phari-saïc nobility. In short, Dr. Percy was here yesterday, and tells me that over Mr. Gough's imaginary Pavia is written *Damascus* in capital letters. Oh, our antiquaries!

Mr. Astle has at last called on me, but I was not well enough to see him. I shall return his visit when I can go out, I hope this will be in a week; I have no pain left, but have a codicil of a nervous fever, for which I am taking the bark. I have nothing new for you in our old way, and therefore will not unnecessarily lengthen my letter, which was only intended to cashier the old painting, though I hear the Antiquaries still go on with having a drawing taken from it. Oh, our antiquaries!

1685. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, March 11, 1776.

Venisti, vidi, vicisti! Your letter arrived on Saturday, General Conway came yesterday. Sir John Legard¹ will have ample credentials to Brunswick, for Mr. Conway is in friendship and correspondence with Prince Ferdinand, and Sir John will certainly have leave to go *after the review*, if officers are allowed to go abroad *at this time*. Thank you heartily for giving me this opportunity.

Mr. Cumberland has published two Odes, in which he

LETTER 1685.—¹ Sixth Baronet, of Ganton, Yorkshire.

has been so bountiful as to secure immortality for Gray, for Dr. James's powder, and indeed for his own Odes, for Father Time would fall asleep before he could read them through. There is a dedication to Romney the painter, that hisses with the pertness of a dull man.

Bishop Keene wrote to me t'other day to know if I knew anything of a whole length of my father, that was to be sold by auction, and if I had any objection to his buying it². Was this folly? or is it repentance, and he wants a memento to remind him that he cheated my father's daughter³ of a living and of marriage?

I mentioned this to my nephew the Bishop of Exeter just now, who told me that when Mr. Grenville was turned out (who had offered my Lord of Ely the Primacy of Ireland), he sent for the person who had brought him the offer, and desired him to tell Mr. Grenville that he should always acknowledge the obligation; but that, as Mr. Grenville was now out, he thought it right (perhaps he said, honest) to tell him that his Lordship must look up to the King, and to *whomever* his Majesty should make his minister.

The Duke of Wirtemberg⁴ is arrived with a mistress, whom he got made Countess of the Empire. The Queen of France would not receive her: she has been received at court here; the man who keeps the *hôtel garni* in Covent Garden would not lodge her for the reputation of his house.

Here is a new epigram from France:

*Quelqu'un, dit-on, a peint Voltaire
Entre la Beaumelle et Fréron;
Cela feroit un vrai Calvaire
S'il n'y manquoit le bon larron.*

² It was bought by Lord Hertford.

³ Mrs. Daye; see note on letter to Mann of Dec. 11, 1752.

⁴ Charles Eugene, Duke of Würt-

temberg; d. 1793. His mistress (to whom he was married in 1786) was a Countess von Hohenhain.

Voltaire himself has written a little poem called *Sesostris*, which I do not send you, for it is only the worn-out choice of Hercules.

P.S. I have often thought of a thing, and which, as you are now at York I will mention, and beg you to suggest to Peckitt. You know he and all the modern glass-painters cannot recover the fine ancient reds and greens. How is that possible, when every necklace-shop sells false rubies and emeralds, which jewellers must take out of the setting. To be sure they are not true! and what are those counterfeits but coloured glass? Pray too, could not Peckitt sketch the exact faces of Henry IV and Richard III from their statues on the screen of your cathedral? I would pay him for them.

1686. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

March 22, 1776.

I HAVE been so long confined, as I am still, that with a dearth of public events, I have been little disposed to write. My gouts, as they never attack my head or stomach, are not alarming. One believes they protract one's life, but they certainly undermine its vigour and its comforts. They reckon this winter unfavourable to that disorder, and I certainly have seen several co-patients who complain of the slowness of their recovery. My common sense tells me that repeated attacks and increasing years must diminish the powers of recovery. If my companions are more sanguine, they flatter themselves, or say they do.

We know nothing new from America, since the general belief that the attempt on Quebec has failed by the death of Montgomery¹, who was not so fortunate as Wolfe, to die

LETTER 1686.—¹ General Richard Montgomery, killed in an attack on Quebec on Dec. 31, 1775.

a conqueror, though very near being so. No authentic accounts are come from thence. In truth, the want of communication, but to the Government, bolstered up by an infinitude of lies, renders everything one hears problematic. However, had the ministers any good news, they would be eager enough to divulge it. The season is far advanced, yet their expeditions are much behindhand, and the troops that do go will arrive during the dangerous heats. Indeed, I do not think the general language is so prophetic of certain success as it was three months ago, and people seem to grow much more clear of the unpromising state of affairs than they were.

What else can I tell you? That dissipation and gaming continue to stride before the war? Yes, verily. A new club is opened in St. James's Street, that piques itself on surpassing all its predecessors. But this is almost commonplace. The Duke of Wirtemberg, who has wasted revenues enough to be worthy to be of it, is here, but *here* is no phenomenon.

A senator of Rome, while Rome survives, can continue to waste as much in one evening as a German prince in an opera for a season. But it is the nation that is really gaming deep—we have set twelve provinces on the cast of a die. The Duke of Chartres², they say, is coming to the University of Newmarket. Different philosophers, in different ages, visit different nations for different kinds of lore. Our crocodiles are not the same with those of Egypt.

The Duke and Duchess³ seem much pleased with Rome. I hope their villa is not within the precincts of the malaria.

² Afterwards the notorious Duke of Orléans. *Walpole*.

³ Of Gloucester.

I did hear the report of the separation of the Cowpers, but not knowing them, never thought about them. To tell you the truth, the Earl⁴, I conclude, is a madman; therefore, I wonder he does *not* come home. Our Countess⁵, I am told, has bought an estate; is it in Tuscany or Naples?

I can only repeat what I told you, that I am persuaded the mortgage saddled on you was a stretch of power. For the other articles, they must depend on deeds.

Everybody is on the quest for tickets for the Duchess of Kingston's trial. I am persuaded her impudence will operate in some singular manner. Probably she will appear in weeds with a train to reach across Westminster Hall, with mourning Maids of Honour to support her when she swoons at her dear Duke's name, and in a black veil to conceal her not blushing. To this farce, novel and curious as it will be, I shall not go. I think cripples have no business in crowds but at the Pool of Bethesda; and to be sure, this is no angel that troubles the waters.

I have nothing to add but an excellent *bon mot* of Wilkes's yesterday, on Lord George Germaine. The former had moved for a more equal representative, from the natural objection to the small boroughs. Two of them, indeed, he owned, had the merit of sending two great ministers; Banbury, which chooses Lord North; and East Grinstead, that furnishes an heroic Secretary of State, who might conquer America, though, he believed, it would not be in *Germany*⁶. Adieu!

⁴ Earl Cowper. *Walpole*.

⁵ The Countess of Orford. *Walpole*.

⁶ Alluding to the battle of Minden; where Lord George Germaine was

disgraced for not leading up the Blues. Lord Chatham boasted of having conquered America in Germany. *Walpole*.

1687. TO DR. GEM¹.

Arlington Street, April 4, 1776.

IT is but fair, when one quits one's party, to give notice to those one abandons—at least, modern patriots, who often imbibe their principles of honour at Newmarket, use that civility. You and I, dear Sir, have often agreed in our political notions; and you, I fear, will die without changing your opinion. For my part, I must confess I am totally altered; and, instead of being a warm partisan of liberty, now admire nothing but despotism. You will naturally ask what place I have gotten, or what bribe I have taken? Those are the criterions of political changes in England—but, as my conversion is of foreign extraction, I shall not be the richer for it. In one word, it is the *Relation du Lit de Justice*² that has operated the miracle. When two ministers³ are found so humane, so virtuous, so excellent, as to study nothing but the welfare and deliverance of the people; when a King listens to such excellent men; and when a Parliament, from the basest, most interested motives, interposes to intercept the blessing, must I not change my opinions, and admire arbitrary power? or can I retain my sentiments without varying the object?

Yes, Sir, I am shocked at the conduct of the Parliament—one would think it was an English one! I am scandalized at the speeches of the *Avocat Général*⁴, who sets up the odious interests of the nobility and clergy against the cries and groans of the poor; and who employs his wicked eloquence to tempt the good young monarch, by personal

LETTER 1687.—¹ An English physician long settled at Paris, no less esteemed for his professional knowledge, than for his kind attention to the poor who applied to him for medical assistance. *Walpole*.

² The first *lit de justice* held by Louis XVI. *Walpole*.

³ Messrs. de Malesherbes and Turgot. *Walpole*.

⁴ Monsieur de Séguier. *Walpole*.

views, to sacrifice the mass of his subjects to the privileges of the few—But why do I call it eloquence? The fumes of interest had so clouded his rhetoric, that he falls into a downright Iricism.—He tells the King that the intended tax on the proprietors of land will affect the property not only of the rich, but of the poor. I should be glad to know what is the property of the poor? Have the poor landed estates? Are those who have landed estates the poor? Are the poor that will suffer by the tax the wretched labourers who are dragged from their famishing families to work on the roads?—But *it is* wicked eloquence when it finds a reason, or gives a reason for continuing the abuse. The Advocate tells the King those abuses are *presque consacrés par l'ancienneté*; indeed, he says all that can be said for nobility, it is *consacrée par l'ancienneté*; and thus the length of the pedigree of abuses renders them respectable!

His arguments are as contemptible when he tries to dazzle the King by the great names of Henri Quatre and Sully, of Louis XIV and Colbert, two couple whom nothing but a mercenary orator would have classed together. Nor, were all four equally venerable, would it prove anything. Even good kings and good ministers, if such have been, may have erred; nay, may have done the best they could. They would not have been good, if they wished their errors should be preserved, the longer they had lasted.

In short, Sir, I think this resistance of the Parliament to the adorable reformation planned by Messrs. de Turgot and Malesherbes is more phlegmatically scandalous than the wildest tyranny of despotism. I forget what the nation was that refused liberty when it was offered. This opposition to so noble a work is worse. A whole people may refuse its own happiness; but these profligate magistrates

resist happiness for others, for millions, for posterity!—Nay, do they not half vindicate Maupeou, who crushed them? And you, dear Sir, will you now chide my apostasy? Have I not cleared myself to your eyes? I do not see a shadow of sound logic in all Monsieur Séguier's speeches, but in his proposing that the soldiers should work on the roads, and that passengers should contribute to their fabric; though, as France is not so luxuriously mad as England, I do not believe passengers could support the expense of the roads. That argument, therefore, is like another that the Avocat proposes to the King, and which, he modestly owns, he believes would be impracticable.

I beg your pardon, Sir, for giving you this long trouble; but I could not help venting myself, when shocked to find such renegade conduct in a Parliament that I was rejoiced had been restored. Poor human kind! is it always to breed serpents from its own bowels? In one country, it chooses its representatives, and they sell it and themselves; in others, it exalts despots; in another, it resists the despot when he consults the good of his people! Can we wonder mankind is wretched, when men are such beings? Parliaments run wild with loyalty, when America is to be enslaved or butchered. They rebel, when their country is to be set free! I am not surprised at the idea of the devil being always at our elbows. They who invented him no doubt could not conceive how men could be so atrocious to one another, without the intervention of a fiend. Don't you think, if he had never been heard of before, that he would have been invented on the late partition of Poland! Adieu, dear Sir.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1688. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

April 8, 1776.

YOU find Circe and Alma Mater are too powerful. Perhaps they are in alliance. *Il faut cultiver son jardin*—you must stick to your garden.

There is Dr. Chandler¹ who was sent by the Dilettanti too, and has just published his *Travels in Greece*. They are rather travels in Pausanias, for he does little but tell us what Pausanias found worth seeing there. Except that, which is no merit, the book is ill-written and unsatisfactory; and yet he revived my visions towards Athens, and made me wish I was a great king and could purchase to restore it: a great king probably would hold it cheaper to conquer it. This Dr. Chandler, as if to avenge his namesake, flirts at Gray for having clothed 'Delphi's barren steep' with woods, and converted Meander's muddy waves into amber, as if amber did not poetically imply the same. I don't wonder, with so little taste, he has written no better.

I bought yesterday a poem in blank verse called *Amwell*, by a John Scott², Esq.; it is a pious design to immortalize a village in which John Scott, Esq., lives. I only mention it for one grand and beautiful image which struck me extremely:—

oft Fancy's ear,
Deep in the gloom of evening woods, has heard
The last sad sigh of Autumn, when his throne
To Winter he resign'd.

It puts me in mind of that sublime passage in Dyer's *Ruins of Rome*:—

hears the voice of Time
Disparting towers.

LETTER 1688.—¹ Richard Chandler, D.D. (1738-1810).

² John Scott (1750-1788), a Quaker.

I don't know whether you are much acquainted with my Swiss footman, David? Well! he does not think there is so great a prince in the world as I. Yesterday as I came to breakfast, he told me coolly the Duke of Wirtemberg had called at eight o'clock and wanted a ticket for Strawberry Hill. 'Bless me!' said I, 'and what did you say?' 'I told his Grace you was not awake, and bad him come again at ten.' 'Good God!' said I, 'tell him to call again! don't you know he is a Sovereign Prince?' 'No, I did think he was only a common Duke!' I could not help laughing, though I was so shocked. In short, he had called again, and had again been sent away, nor can David yet conceive that I was to be waked. I was forced to write a thousand lies and excuses, and swear I was bedrid with the gout, and could not pay my duty to his Serene Highness, and upon the whole was very glad for being reduced to plead the gout. I sent Philip to show my house, and persist in my crippletude, which in truth is still so fresh, that it would all have revived, if I must have walked or stood two hours to show his Serenity the tombs.

They are translating Shakespeare in France, and *Othello* is so well done, that it has incredible success. The Abbé Barthélemi, a very good judge and no partialist to England, desired Madame du Deffand to tell me he finds Shakespeare *supérieur à tout et qu'il me prioit de ne regarder que le dieu et de ne pas faire attention à l'homme*. This is a strong proof that both the Abbé and the translators understand Shakespeare, but what will they do with Falstaff?—impossible, unless they are as able as Townley³, who translated *Hudibras* so admirably, which before seemed the most impracticable of all achievements.

Is not your residence nearly exhausted, and don't you

³ John Towneley (1697–1782); his translation of the first canto of *Hudi-*

bras was published anonymously in 1757 at Paris.

intend coming southward? Am not I to harbour you? You shall be troubled with no Serene Highnesses, nor have I wasted all my budget in my letters; Lady Di's drawings alone are worth a pilgrimage,—ask Mr. Palgrave, who has seen them.

P.S. I have made a blunder, which will have puzzled you. I recollect it was a Dr. Chapman, not Dr. Chandler, who made so good an end by choking himself with mackerel.

1689. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Eve of St. Elizabeth of Kingston,
Strawberry Hill.

I WILL not trouble you for a cast of King Richard's face, since there is no such thing; nor of King Henry's, since it has lost its mouth. I am grown such an antiquity myself, and have so little time left to satisfy my fancies, that I willingly contract them within as narrow a compass as I can; yet you commission me to send you journals of the Duchess's trial, as if I was to be there! My curiosity would certainly carry me thither sooner almost than to any show upon earth. I have known her from five years old, and seen her in all her stages, but I am not well enough to attend this last act of her drama—possibly may never go to a public place again, having a strong notion of the propriety of seceding, and not trailing one's weaknesses into the world, when age and illness have told one to retire. Thus you must expect no ocular accounts from me, perhaps nothing better than the newspapers would tell you, except with a little more authenticity.

Tuesday, April 16.

The Duchess-Countess has raised my opinion of her

understanding, which was always but at low ebb; for she has behaved so sensibly and with so little affectation, that her auditory are loud in applause of her. She did not once squall, scream, or faint, was not impudent, nor gorgeous, looked well though pale and trembling; was drest all in black, yet in silk, not crape; with no pennon hoisted but a widow's peak. She spoke of her innocence and of her awe of so venerable an assembly. Yesterday passed in the pleading of her counsel against a second trial, urging the finality of the ecclesiastic sentence. I should think no more would be done to-day than hearing the reply of the prosecutor's counsel.

A previous incident was more entertaining than any part of the piece; the *Grand Seneschal*¹ invited the Duke of Wirtemberg to dinner by a card, and translated it neither into law Latin nor Norman French. By the help of Boyer's *Dictionary* it began *Le haut Intendant envoie ses compliments*, &c. He ordered everybody to be uncovered while the King's commission was being read, and then sat down himself and put on his hat.

Lord Nuneham has just been here, not attending his friend through all her course. She lay at home (or, according to the chaste modern phrase, *slept* there), and the Usher of Black Rod slept in the next room. My journals are short, but you shall have the sequel. Adieu!

P.S. I this minute receive a letter from poor Mr. Granger's nephew, to tell me his uncle was seized, at the communion table, on Sunday, with an apoplectic fit, and died yesterday morning at five o'clock. He was a good man as ever lived.

2nd P.S. Thurlow, Wedderburn, and Dunning have

LETTER 1689.—¹ Earl Bathurst, who acted as High Steward at the Duchess's trial.

answered the Duchess's counsel, and then the Lords adjourned till Friday; so at soonest you will hear again by Saturday's post.

1690. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

April 16, 1776.

You will be concerned, my good Sir, for what I have this minute heard from his nephew, that poor Mr. Granger was seized at the communion table on Sunday with an apoplexy, and died yesterday morning at five. I have answered the letter with a word of advice about his MSS., that they may not fall into the hands of booksellers. He had been told by idle people so many gossiping stories, that it would hurt him and living persons if all his collections were to be printed; for as he was incapable of telling an untruth himself, he suspected nobody else—too great goodness in a biographer.

Yours ever,
H. W.

P.S. The whole world is occupied with the Duchess of Kingston's trial. I don't tell you a word of it, for you will not care about it these two hundred years.

1691. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, April 17, 1776.

I OPENED your letter of the 2nd with trembling, for the Duchess of Gloucester had told me, with great concern, the danger of Lady Lucy¹. As she was still alive, and your nephew thought her in less danger, I will venture to

LETTER 1691.—¹ Lady Lucy Noel, wife of Sir Horace Mann the younger. *Walpole*.

hope she is safe, because I wish it so much for all your sakes ; but I shall be very impatient for another letter, and to hear you yourself are better.

You may think of America, if you please ; but we think and talk but of one subject, the solemn comedy that is acting in Westminster Hall. Deep wagers had been laid that the Duchess-Countess² would decamp before her trial. This, with a million of other stories, have been so spread, that I am determined to believe no one fact but what I shall read in the printed trial ; for at it I have not been, though curious enough about so august a mummery, and so original a culprit ; but I am too little recovered to encounter crowds.

The scene opened on Wednesday with all its pomp, and had drawn hither even a Countess Castiglione, from Milan. The doubly-noble prisoner went through her part with universal admiration. Instead of her usual ostentatious folly, and clumsy pretensions to cunning, all her conduct was decent, and even seemed natural. Her dress was entirely black and plain ; her attendants not too numerous, her dismay at first perfectly unaffected. A few tears balanced cheerfulness enough ; and her presence of mind and attention never deserted her. This rational behaviour, and the pleadings of her four counsel, who contended for the finality of the Ecclesiastical Court's sentence against a second trial, carried her triumphantly through the first day, and turned the stream much in her favour.

Yesterday was less propitious. The Attorney and Solicitor-Generals³, and Dunning, refuted the Duchess's counsel, made a very contrary impression, and seemed to have unhinged some of her firmness. She was blooded as soon as she retired, fell into a great passion of tears, and is, or

² Elizabeth Chudleigh, Countess of Bristol, married during the Earl's life to the last Duke of Kingston. *Walpole*.

³ Thurlow and Wedderburn.

affects to be, very ill. However, the Lords have given her and themselves a respite of two days. On Friday the opinion of the judges is to be asked on her plea against a second trial, which, it is not doubted, will be overruled. All the future is uncertainty; whether she will be sent back to the Ecclesiastic Court, or whether the Lords will proceed to trial—either of which would produce deep probing into her history; or whether, to avoid either, she will not plead guilty as soon as the Ecclesiastic Court's decisive jurisdiction is set aside. In fact, this is as much the trial of the Ecclesiastic Court as of the prisoner; and may, at least ought to, produce a reform of that Popish tribunal. The Earl of Bristol⁴ does not stand in a fairer predicament; and is not the whole burlesque, when, except the foreigners, there could not be one person in the Hall who was not as much convinced of the bigamy as of their own existence? But the world can make *laws* against crimes, till nobody knows whether there is any crime which may not be committed *legally*.

I now submit to recall my thoughts to America, for the sake of you Italians and little states, who do not know how superior fashion is in a great nation to national interests. You need not be too impatient for events. The army that was to overrun the Atlantic continent is not half set out yet; but it will be time enough to go into winter quarters. What we have heard lately thence is not very promising. The Congress, that was said to be squabbling, seems to act with harmony and spirit; and Quebec is not thought to be so safe as it was a month ago. However, that is the business of the ministers; nobody else troubles his head about the matter. Few people knew much of America

⁴ Augustus John Hervey, Earl of Bristol. He had never avowed his marriage with Miss Chudleigh, and

was supposed to have connived for a sum of money at her marrying the Duke. *Walpole*.

before; and now all communication is cut off, and the administration does not think itself bound to chant its own disappointments, or the praises of the enemy, we forget it as much as if Columbus had not routed it out of the ocean.

Who thought of Mrs. Pitt⁵ rising again at Pisa? I was told she was in Provence, and imagined her on her return. But who can calculate the motions of such eccentric heads as the English? My dear countrymen and women are—very sensible.

I return to poor Lady Lucy and you and your nephew. How I wish you all at ease about her! Pray, too, be assured I acquiesce in all you say on your own return, though grieved at your resolution, and more so at the necessity you find in adhering to it. It is not my disposition to prefer my own pleasures to the welfare of my friends. Your return might have opened a warm channel of affection, which above thirty years could not freeze; but I am sure you know my steadiness too well to suspect me of cooling to you, because we are both grown too old to meet again. I wished that meeting, as a luxury beyond what old age seldom tastes; but I am too well prepared for parting with everything, to be ill-humouredly chagrined because one vision fails. Visions are the consolation of life; it is wise to indulge them, unless one builds on them as realities. Our dreams are almost at an end! Mine are mixed with pain; yet I think it does not make me peevish. I accept with thankfulness every hour in which I do not suffer. I am not at all impatient for the moment that will terminate both anguish and cheerfulness, and I endeavour to form my mind to resigning the first with gratitude, and the latter with easy submission. Adieu!

⁵ Mrs. Anne Pitt, sister of William, Earl of Chatham. *Walpole.*

1692. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

April 20, 1776.

YOUR obedient journalist proceeds. He might plead a headache; but as that is generally pleaded when not felt, a real one must not be disgraced by being turned into an excuse, especially by so sacred a minister of truth—as a news-writer.

The plot thickens, or rather opens. Yesterday the judges were called on for their opinions, and *unâ voce* dismantled the Ecclesiastic Court, which has not been treated with much respect by the Common Law. The Attorney-General then detailed the life and adventures of Elizabeth Chudleigh, *alias* Hervey, *alias* the most high and puissant Princess the Duchess of Kingston. Her Grace bore the narration with a front worthy of her exalted rank. Then was produced the capital witness, the ancient damsel who was present at her first marriage and tucked her up for consummation. To this witness the Duchess was benign, but had a transitory swoon at the mention of her dear Duke's name; and at intervals has been blooded enough to have supplied her execution if necessary. Two babes were likewise proved to have blessed her first nuptials, one of which for aught that appears may exist and become Earl of Bristol. The gallant and faithful Earl of Hillsborough used all his prowess to cross-question and browbeat the deponent, but her Grace's other champion, Lord Mansfield, did not enter the lists. The court is now hearing the other witnesses. I have forsworn prophecy, and therefore tell you no particulars of what is to come. If I hear anything in time this evening of the events of the day, you shall know; if not, good night.

P.S. It is near seven, and the trial is not over. I must

go out and learn anecdotes, and cannot come home before the post goes out; so you must have patience till next week.

1693. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Sunday, April 21, 1776.

I HAVE an half-hour to spare, and employ it to continue the trial, which will not be finished before Tuesday evening, when I shall certainly neither have collected the sequel, nor have time to write it, as I am to dine at the Royal Academy.

Friday and Saturday have produced so much against the Duchess-Countess, that she must have been distracted to have sought the trial, or not poisoned the witnesses. The judges quashed the Ecclesiastic Court as summarily as Luther could have done; and Thurlow has given an Atalantis of her Grace's adventures, confirmed by evidence. A maid has appeared who was present at her first marriage and almost at its consummation. Serjeant Hawkins has authenticated the birth of at least one child; and the widow of the parson who married her, and on whom she forced a fictitious register, when she expected the late Lord Bristol's death, and had a mind to be a Countess, has deposed, that though privy to all these circumstances, visiting the new *Duchess*, the latter said to her, 'Mrs. Phillips, was not the Duke very good to marry an old maid?' Both these women her avarice had turned against her. Lord Barrington, subpoenaed against her, after taking the oath, declared he would betray no confidential secrets. The Lords were going to hang him for perjury, but thought better on it, lest a quarrel between the two Houses should prove favourable to America. His Lordship faltered as well as they did; told more than he had declared he would not tell, and yet prevaricated; but for this

interlude you must wait for the printed trial, as I cannot relate it accurately.

To-morrow the Duchess makes her defence; and on Tuesday the Lords give sentence. She has not preserved the philosophy of the first day, but abused the first female evidence while giving testimony. Lord Mansfield left the Ecclesiastical Court in the lurch; his cowardice always supplanting his knavery. Adieu! you shall know the sequel by Wednesday or Thursday's post.

P.S. When does your residence conclude? and when do you come to Strawberry Hill?

1694. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

April 23, 1776.

IF you expect a long letter, you will be disappointed; if you are tired of my letters, you will be released. The wisdom of the land has been exerted five days in turning a Duchess into a Countess, and does not think it a punishable crime for a Countess to convert herself into a Duchess. After a paltry defence and an oration of fifty pages, which she herself had written and pronounced well, the sages, in spite of the Attorney-General, who brandished a hot iron, dismissed her with the simple injunction of paying her fees; all voting her guilty, the Duke of Newcastle softening his vote with *erroneously, not intentionally*. So ends that solemn farce! which may be indifferently bound up with the State Trials and *The History of Moll Flanders*. If you write to her you must direct to the Countess of Bristol. The Earl, they say, does not intend to leave her that title, nor the house of Meadows a shilling, but there will be quæres to both designs. The Ecclesiastic Court, full as guilty as the culprit, I dare to say, will escape as well.

Adieu! allow that I have obeyed you implicitly. I am glad to have done with her.

1695. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, April 24, 1776.

I WRITE again so soon, because I owe you the sequel of the trial. If the Pope expects his Duchess back, he must create her one, for her peers have reduced her to a Countess. Her folly and obstinacy now appear in their full vigour; at least her faith in the Ecclesiastic Court, trusting to the infallibility of which she provoked this trial, in the face of every sort of detection. A living witness of the first marriage, a register of it fabricated long afterwards by herself, the widow of the clergyman who married her, many confidants to whom she had trusted the secret, and even Hawkins the surgeon, privy to the birth of her child, appeared against her. The Lords were tender, and would not probe the Earl's collusion; but the Ecclesiastical Court, who so readily accepted their juggle, and sanctified the second match, were brought to shame: they care not, if no reformation follows. The Duchess, who could produce nothing else of consequence in her favour, tried the powers of oratory, and made a long oration, in which she cited the protection of her late mistress¹. Her counsel would have curtailed this harangue, but she told them they might be good lawyers, but did not understand speaking to the passions. She concluded her rhetoric with a fit, and the trial with rage, when convicted of the bigamy. The

LETTER 1695.—¹ Miss Chudleigh had been Maid of Honour to the Princess Dowager of Wales, and remained so long after she was married to Mr. Hervey, but the marriage was not owned. As she married the Duke

of Kingston, without being a widow, the enigmatic epitaph of *Aelia Laelia Crispus, nec Virgo, nec Mulier, nec Vidua, sed Omnia*, was applied to her by the author of these letters. *Walpole*.

Attorney-General laboured to have her burnt in the hand, but the judges were hustled into an opinion against it, and it was waived. So all this complication of knavery receives no punishment, but the loss of the Duchy; unless the civil courts below are more severe than the supreme tribunal; and thither her antagonists intend to resort. The Earl's² family have talked loudly of a divorce; but if it is true that he has given her a bond of thirty thousand pounds not to molest her, and that this bond is in Lord Barrington's hands, either she will recriminate, and collusion proved prevents a divorce; or his silence will speak the collusion. I am heartily tired of this farce, having heard of nothing else this fortnight. Happily, in this giant town one is not long troubled with stale events. Did I tell you that a Madame Castiglione came on purpose from Milan for this show?

As I have heard no more from you of Lady Lucy, I flatter myself that all danger is over. I shall like to have it confirmed.

There is a report to-day that Spain has made free with Jamaica, and taken it. I do not believe it; but it is certain that America furnishes administration with no good news. Fifteen thousand of the destined troops are not yet sailed thither.

I have just met with your name in a printed book, in which your politeness is celebrated. It is called *Letters from Italy by an Englishwoman*. This is a Mrs. Miller, whom perhaps you recollect. Ten years ago I knew her and her husband, the faithful companion of her travels, at Bath, near which they have a small house and garden, in a beautiful spot called Bath-Easton. They were mighty civil simple people, living with her mother, Mrs. Riggs, a rough kind of English humourist. They ran out their

² The Earl of Bristol.

fortune, and all went to France to repair it. In France the mother was left with the grandchildren, while the fond pair resorted to Italy. Thence they returned, *her* head turned with France and *bouts-rimés*; *his*, with *virtù*. They have instituted a poetic academy at Bath-Easton, give out subjects, and distribute prizes; publish the prize verses, and make themselves completely ridiculous; which is pity, as they are good-natured, well-meaning people. The poor Arcadian patroness does not spell one word of French or Italian right through her three volumes of Travels. I wonder we have never had our friend Lady Pomfret's, as she had something now and then like sense; they would have been still more absurd. Adieu!

P.S. I must add an anecdote of the Duchess-Countess that I heard last night. On some altercation between her and Sir Francis Molyneux, Black Rod, under whose custody she was in her own house, she carried him into another room, and showed him a hole in the ceiling or wainscot made by a pistol-ball. I have heard formerly that she used to terrify the Duke of Kingston in that manner with threatening to murder him or herself. I think they favoured her age as much as her person on her trial, for they have made her but fifty. She must be fifty-five or six. She and her brother were my playfellows, when we lived at Chelsea, and her father was Deputy-Governor of the College. I am fifty-nine almost, and boys and girls do not play together unless near of an age, much less before one of them is born. I believe you remember them at Chelsea as well as I; and what a heroine her mother was—at least I have not forgotten this story of the latter. She was coming home late at night, with two of the old pensioners as patrol, walking behind the coach. She was asleep, and was awakened by three footpads, one of whom held a pistol

at her breast. She coolly put her head out of the other window, and said, 'Fire!' The patrol fired, and shot the robber. The daughter does not degenerate.

Second P.S. There is not a word of truth in the report about Jamaica; such endless lies are coined every day, that one is afraid of writing a word of news before it is musty with age.

1696. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, May 4, 1776.

Do you think I have a Duchess to deplume every day, that you bid me write to you again already? Unconscionable divine, voracious appetite! think of my poor swelled fingers that sigh after repose; think of my quivering ankles, that will carry me to no mart of news. I am here these two days, smelling my lilacs, and listening to my nightingales, and leaving the wicked town to the young and healthy. I did not *utinam* that *sedes senectae* should be my fate, that I should be able to do nothing but *sit* in my garden; but I am content hitherto, though I doubt the rest of my days will be still less comfortable; you might gild them if you would, but your letter hesitates whether you shall come southward or not this summer; remember, I must not calculate without my host the gout. Well, let me see the drawing you talk of, and which yet I must wait two posts before I know whether I am to see or not. You must have a mighty opinion of my patience or indifference, when you put it to so tantalizing a trial; be assured I have neither; neither the virtue of commanding my desires, nor the apathy that looks like commanding them. Those same desires of mine, it is true, are exceedingly contracted of late years, but then I *valdè volo* what I do *volo*.

My curiosity about anything you draw or write is augmented in proportion as it is decayed in general: my eyes are grown stronger as my other utensils are enfeebled. They twinkle with eagerness when you tell me of your drawing, or your *Garden* being finished.

The Countess of Bristol retired to Paris incontinently. A *ne exeat regno* came forth the night she was gone! a strange neglect in her adversaries! Don't let us talk of her any more; yes, I will tell you what the droll caustic Lord Abercorn said. Somebody hoped his Lordship had not suffered by the trial; he replied, 'Nobody suffered by it.'

They write to me from London that the provincial army, having been reinforced, had prepared to storm Boston, and had begun to cannonade it, and that General Howe, unable to maintain his post, had withdrawn with all his forces to Halifax. I had heard this on Thursday before I came out of town, but did not believe it¹, for the Americans have done nothing yet that has given me a high opinion of their generalship. And that Halifax was left for Howe to retreat to is hitherto incomprehensible, not to me, for I am ignorance itself; but everybody says so, and you know everybody is always in the right.

Soame Jenyns has published a confirmation of the Christian religion from internal evidence. Pray was not his *Origin of Evil* a little heterodox? I have dipped a little into this new piece, and thought I saw something like irony, but to be sure I am wrong, for the *Ecclesiastical Court* are quite satisfied. I must seal my letter, and leave my blue room to be seen by *Prince Yuzupoff*, who sent for a card of admission. We have a torrent of foreigners in England, and unfortunately they are all sent hither, but then

LETTER 1696.—¹ It was the case; Howe evacuated Boston on March 6, 1776.

they comprehend nothing, and are gone in half an hour. I have read an account of Strawberry in a book called *Londres*; in which my name is Robert, my house lives at Putney, the book-cases in the library are of inlaid woods, and I have not a window but is entirely of painted glass. This is called seeing and describing. Adieu!

Yours ever,
H. W.

1697. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

May 14, 1776.

You are not apt to express yourself unintelligibly, nor I, I hope, to misunderstand you; I did not expect a drawing in colour, but with the pen, in *chiaroscuro*, which I like better on some subjects than in oil. I am still sorry it is not to be in the Exhibition.

I am but this minute come to town, and know nothing but from the papers, which say everything prospers with the Americans. As they are driving out all the Scotch, I conclude the Duchess of Kingston will contribute another bank-note¹.

Do you, or do you not, ever come to town again? do not be enigmatic in a reply to this question.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1698. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 17, 1776.

As I knew no more than the newspapers would tell you, I did not announce to you the retreat of the King's army from Boston. Great pains were taken, and no wonder, to soften this disgrace. Such arts may serve a moment,

LETTER 1697.—¹ She had contributed fifty pounds towards the relief of the North American clergy.

but the truth emerges, unless some advantage compensates—and as yet, that is neither the case, nor seems likely to be. What is or will be the fate of General Howe or his army cannot be known for some time—I doubt his prospect is not fair. Many think Quebec itself is gone¹, and that the ministry know it. The American war begins to lose its popularity.

I saw in the papers to-day that your younger sister² is dead. I tell it you without ceremony: I believe you never was acquainted with her; nor was I.

My principal reason for writing now, is to send you a letter of attorney, without which Sir Edward and I cannot receive our salary: you will be so good as to have it witnessed by any two Englishmen, and return it as soon as you can. I hope this slight one is all the trouble we shall give you.

By the long interval, I trust Lady Lucy is quite out of danger, and your nephew at ease about her.

We swarm with new peers and peeresses, English, Scotch, and Irish; you will see the two former in the *Gazette*; the last are known, but not yet declared. We have coveys of foreigners too, particularly French: I have given two dinners here lately to the latter.

Is it not shameful to send such a note as this so far? If I would have recourse to little arts, I might have transcribed the list of peerages, which would have reached to the bottom of the page; but a bead-roll of unknown names would only tire you. It has long been a settled point that we cannot correspond about obscure persons, as many of these are. You are a stranger to common actors:

LETTER 1698.—¹ This was not the case; General Carleton held out until May, when the town was relieved by the arrival of a British squadron. Carleton then sallied out and routed

the besiegers.

² The two younger sisters of Sir Horace Mann were married to two gentlemen of the name of Foote, in Kent. *Walpole*.

like heroic tragedies, we can deal only in very great personages. Even newspapers have the advantage of me, for they may detail births, deaths, and marriages. The summer will probably not be so barren as that season generally is, though the great campaign will scarce begin before August; yet Quebec and Halifax must be fruitful of something, and perhaps Virginia and New York: but you are no vulture, and do not desire to banquet on battles. In one word, my letters, written for your information, must depend on events; and when they are short, or none, you will excuse it; and now that half my letter has been an apology, it is best to put an end to it.

May 18th.

Your letter of the 4th is this moment arrived, with others from France, and would enable me to cancel my last paragraphs. I am heartily sorry for your accounts of Lady Lucy, but cannot believe in the contagion of consumptions, especially in a better climate. Were it catching, it would be still more common here than it is. The child may indeed be affected, as partaking of the mother's constitution; but I, who have little faith in physicians, have none at all in those of Italy, where physic is as much an old woman as religion.

As soon as I go to town, I will inquire into the etiquette of your proxyhood³. The King gives plate to his godchildren; you, I dare to say, are to give nothing, and indubitably have no particular dress. Here I think the lord or lady who represent, ride backwards and alone in a royal coach; as your own is a representative of the King's, no doubt it will do; but you shall know in time.

In the present state of America, the estate of Tortola is not worth a lock of wool, nor would anybody purchase it

³ Sir Horace was to stand godfather for the King to a child of Earl Cowper. *Walpole*.

but for a song. By the abstract of the letter to your nephew, the best pretensions seem to be in your brother's children, though by the property being reverted to the crown, you or your nephew might ask it. If obtained, it would certainly be advisable to sell it, for the expense of improving such grants is enormous, and can rarely be advantageous but to those who inhabit the spot. Proprietors are exposed to all sorts of disadvantages, and are enormously cheated by their agents, under every difficulty of prosecution. I know Mr. Duane, who has one of the fairest characters of the law, is old and very rich; and whatever he may have thought of formerly, perhaps does not think of the purchase at present. It will be long, I fear, ere American improvements revert to their late rapidity—however, the moment makes the boon a less favour to ask or grant.

A great revolution has happened in France. Monsieur de Maurepas and Vergennes, either not to burn their own fingers, or to involve Turgot (of whom the former was grown jealous) and Malesherbes in a scrape, set the latter on representing to the Queen that she ought to abandon M. de Guisnes⁴. Her Majesty, and consequently the public, laughed at him. He, who hated his place, asked to resign, and it was at last granted. But to-day's letters add, that Turgot is also dismissed, and the King has thanked M. de Guisnes for his services and made him a *Duc à brevet*. This implies what I have said these six months, that a woman who passes every night with a man, however unmanly and unwomanly, would prevail at last, if he passed no moments with any other woman. Malesherbes is the best of men, but void of all ambition. Turgot has the ambition of reforming the nation, and blessing the

⁴ Guines and Turgot had quarrelled, and Guines had in consequence been recalled by Louis XVI.

The Queen favoured Guines as an adherent of Choiseul, whom she wished to restore to power.

people; is intrepid, indifferent to fortune, and determined to carry his points, or fall. Such men, friends of human kind, could not think of war, however fair the opportunity we offered to them. Poor France, and poor England! Choiseul, if not Choiseul, some Louvois or other, will rise out of this fall of patriot philosophers; and then we shall be forced to see the wisdom of the Stamp Act, and of persisting in taxing America! Somebody rings at the gate, but I have said enough to furnish you with reflections. Monsieur de Noailles is named Ambassador hither, but that does not comfort me.

May 20.

I saw Lady Holderness⁵ to-night and consulted her, and found I had been right in all my directions. *You* can give nothing unless you are ordered; and as you cannot possibly go in one of the King's coaches, need not ride backwards in your own. I have neither room, nor more to say if I had.

Postscript. You must fill up the blank with the date, and insert the name of William Suckling, Esq., after the words in the blank *authorize and appoint*. After W. Suckling, add, *Deputy Collector of the Customs, of New North Street, Red Lion Square*. I have writ the words necessary with a pencil.

1699. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, May 20, 1776.

By my being here for some days I did not receive your drawing so soon as I ought to have done, nor even knew it was arrived. I thank you for it and like it excessively. You have done full justice to Gray; I am sorry he cannot

⁵ One of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte. *Walpole*.

see it, for it is as fine as Mr. Bentley's drawings for the rest of his Odes. I admire particularly the figure of

Mista, black terrific maid¹,

who has a masculine gait that put me in mind of old Leveridge², when he used to act Hecate in *Macbeth*. I hope you will draw the *Descent of Odin*, too, which I love as much as any of Gray's Works. I never was fond of the *Triumphs of Owen*.

To-night I have received (here in town) from Mr. Stonhewer your second *Garden*³; it has my fullest imprimatur. I thought the beginning a little cold, but it soon rises into charming poetry, and from the 210th line is more beautiful than the first book. I like the 'sheep devouring the lawn into verdure,' and from thence all is quite to my taste. 'The dusty Sabbath' is admirable, but above all I am touched with the scene of cottage children, which is equal to anything you ever wrote; so are the lines on their sorrow and smiles. The story of Abdolonimus finishes the whole nobly. Write away, write away, and if you will not come to town—write away; yet I do wish now and then to see such a priest of Apollo. Adieu!

P.S. This was not sent so soon as it ought to have been by an accident.

1700. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 27, 1776.

THIS fatal year puts to the proof the nerves of my friendship! I was disappointed of seeing you when I had set

LETTER 1699.—¹ See Gray's *Fatal Sisters*.

² Richard Leveridge, born about 1670, d. 1758; a singer and composer of songs. In the first capacity he acted Hecate in *Macbeth* when it was

produced with music stated to have been partly composed by him.

³ Probably the second book of Mason's poem *The English Flower Garden*.

my heart on it; and now I have lost Mr. Chute¹! It is a heavy blow; but such strokes reconcile oneself to parting with this pretty vision, life! What is it, when one has no longer those to whom one speaks as confidentially as to one's own soul? Old friends are the great blessing of one's latter years—half a word conveys one's meaning. They have memory of the same events, and have the same mode of thinking. Mr. Chute and I agreed invariably in our principles; he was my counsel in my affairs, was my oracle in taste, the standard to whom I submitted my trifles, and the genius that presided over poor Strawberry! His sense decided me in everything; his wit and quickness illuminated everything. I saw him oftener than any man; to him in every difficulty I had recourse, and him I loved to have here, as our friendship was so entire, and we knew one another so entirely, that he alone never was the least constraint to me. We passed many hours together without saying a syllable to each other; for we were both above ceremony. I left him without excusing myself, read or wrote before him, as if he were not present. Alas! alas! and how *self* presides even in our grief! I am lamenting myself, not him!—no, I am lamenting my other self. Half is gone; the other remains solitary. Age and sense will make me bear my affliction with submission and composure—but for ever—that little *for ever* that remains, I shall miss him. My first thought will always be, 'I will go talk to Mr. Chute on this'; the second, 'alas! I cannot'; and therefore judge how my life is poisoned! I shall only seem to be staying behind one that is set out a little before me.

Mr. Chute for these last two or three years was much broken by his long and repeated shocks of gout, yet was

LETTER 1700.—¹ John Chute, Esq., of the Vine in Hampshire; the last of the male line. *Walpole*.

amazingly well, considering he had suffered by it from twenty to seventy-three ! Still as he never had had it in his head or stomach, I never was alarmed till last summer, when he had a low lingering fever, and sickness and pain in his breast, with returns of an excessive palpitation at his heart, which formerly much alarmed me, but of which he had been free for some years. He got better and went to the Bath, which gave him the gout, and he returned quite well ; so well, that, alarmed at our situation, he thought of drawing some money out of the stocks and buying an annuity, saying he thought his life as good as any man's for five years. I am sure I thought so too. On Thursday last, being surprised at his not calling on me for three days, which was unusual, I went to him and was told that he was very ill. I found him in bed ; he had so violent a pain in his breast that two days before he had sent for Dr. Thomas, whom he had consulted in the summer, though of all men the most averse to physicians. Thomas had given him an hundred drops of laudanum and assafoetida. Mr. Chute said, 'It is not the gout ; I have had my palpitation, and fear it is something of a polypus.' Thus, perfectly reasonable, though with much more indifference than he who was all spirit and eagerness used to have, I attributed it to the laudanum, and indeed he desired me to leave him, as he was heavy, and wanted to sleep. He dozed all that evening, and had no return of pain. On Friday morning, still without pain. I saw him again. He had taken more assafoetida, but no more laudanum ; yet, when I said I trusted the pain was gone, he said, 'I do not know ; the effects of the laudanum are not yet gone.' I said I thought that impossible ; that the pain would have surmounted the laudanum by that time, if the pain were not removed. I was coming hither on business, and charged his gentleman to send for me if the pain returned.

On Saturday morning I rejoiced at not receiving even a letter by the post, and concluded all was well.

This dream of satisfaction lasted all that day and Saturday night. I knew he would take no more laudanum, unless the pain returned, and that then I should be advertised. But, oh, unhappy! yesterday, just as I had breakfasted, and was in the garden, I heard the bell at the gate ring, and wondered, as it was but ten o'clock, who could come to me so early. I went to see, and met my *valet de chambre*, with a letter in his hand, who said, 'Oh, Sir, Mr. Chute is dead!' In a word, he had continued quite easy till three that morning, when he said, 'Who is in the room?' His own gentleman replied, 'I, Sir!' and, going to the bed, found him very ill, ran to call help, and, returning as quick as possible, saw him dead! It was certainly a polypus; his side immediately grew black as ink. A charming death for him, dearest friend! And why should I lament? His eyes, always short-sighted, were grown dimmer, his hearing was grown imperfect, his hands were all chalk-stones and of little use, his feet very lame—yet how not lament? The vigour of his mind was strong as ever; his powers of reasoning clear as demonstration; his rapid wit astonishing as at forty, about which time you and I knew him first. Even the impetuosity of his temper was not abated, and all his humane virtues had but increased with his age. He was grown sick of the world; saw very, very few persons; submitted with unparalleled patience to all his sufferings; and, in five-and-thirty years, I never once saw or heard him complain of them, nor, passionate as he was, knew him fretful. His impatience seemed to proceed from his vast sense, not from his temper: he saw everything so clearly and immediately, that he could not bear a momentary contradiction from folly or defective reasoning. Sudden contempt broke out, particularly on

politics, which, having been fixed in him by a most sensible father, and matured by deep reflection, were rooted in his inmost soul. His truth, integrity, honour, spirit, and abhorrence of all dirt, confirmed his contempt; and even I, who am pretty warm and steady, was often forced to break off politics with him, so impossible was it to be zealous enough to content him when I most agreed with him. Nay, if I disputed with him, I learnt something from him, and always saw truth in a stronger and more summary light.

His possession of the quintessence of argument reduced it at once into axioms, and the clearness of his ideas struck out flashes of the brightest wit. He saw so suddenly and so far, that, as Mr. Bentley said of him long ago, ‘His wit strikes the more you analyse it, and more than at first hearing; he jumps over two or three intermediate ideas, and couples the first with the third or fourth.’ Don’t wonder I pour out my heart to you; you knew him, and know how faithfully true all I say of him. My loss is most irreparable. To me he was the most faithful and secure of friends, and a delightful companion. I shall not seek to replace him. Can I love any that are old, more than I have had reason for loving them? and is it possible to love younger, as one loved an habitual old friend of thirty-five years’ standing? I have young relations that may grow upon me, for my nature is affectionate, but can they grow *old* friends? My age forbids that. Still less can they grow companions. Is it friendship to explain half one says? One must relate the history of one’s memory and ideas; and what is that to the young, but old stories? No, my dear Sir, *you* could be that resource, but I must not think of it—I must not be selfish. I must do what I ought to do, while I remain here; pass my time as amusingly as I can; enjoy the friends I have left; drink my grief in silence—it is too

sincere for parade; and what cares the world about my private sensations? Or what has an old man to do but to try to be forgotten; and to remember how soon he will be so? Forgive this expansion of my heart; it was necessary to me. I will not often mention poor Mr. Chute even to you. His loss is engraven on my soul, and real grief does not seek for applause. Could the world's plaudit comfort me, sit with me, hear me, advise me? Did it know Mr. Chute's worth as well as I did? Does it love me as well? When it does, I will beg its compassion. I have done, and will now show you I am master of myself, and remember *you*, and consider that at this distance of time you cannot feel what I do, and must be anxious about public affairs. If I indulged my own feelings, I should forswear thinking of the public. *He* is gone to whom I ran with every scrap of news I heard; but I promised to forget myself: I will go take a walk, shed a tear, and return to you more composed.

I take up my pen again, and fear my last sentences have made you expect some news. I know none; except that I think the intoxication of this country begins to wear off. The stocks have taken the alarm, and the ministers have felt it some time. The change in the French councils has changed the spirits of ours. I believe almost any peace would be welcome to them. I doubt the Americans have experienced too much of our inability to hurt them; and as I have no great faith in virtue tempted by power, I expect that the American leaders, having too fair a field before them, will not easily part with dictatorships and consulships to retire to their private ploughs. Oh madness! to have squandered away such an empire! Now we tremble at France, which America enabled us to resist. How naturally our ideas hang on our country, even when all future ages are the same to one who is going to leave it! What will it

be to me a few years hence, whether England shrinks back to its little insular insignificance under George the Third or George the Tenth? Yet, as our minds seldom roam into the future affairs of the world, we rejoice or grieve over the state of our country according to the condition in which we leave it at our departure. Else why do people nurse visions of pride about their own descendants? How long do the greatest and most ancient families last? What a speck in rolling ages does the longest genealogy occupy!—but I will moralize no more. To-day's misfortune has given a wise cast to my mind. Spirits and folly will have their turn again, and perhaps are as wise. To act with common sense according to the moment, is the best wisdom I know; and the best philosophy, to do one's duties, take the world as it comes, submit respectfully to one's lot, bless the Goodness that has given so much happiness with it, whatever it is, and despise affectation, which only makes our weakness more contemptible, by showing we know that we are not what we wish to appear. Adieu!

1701. TO VISCOUNT NUNEHAM.

I AM very sorry, my dear Lord, to have missed seeing you both yesterday and to-day; and so I always am, as your goodness to me is excessive, and most gratefully felt. I wished particularly to ask a favour, which is that your Lordship will do me the honour of dining at Strawberry Hill some day before you go out of town; and I flatter myself Lady Nuneham will do so too, though she ought to be ashamed to come so near my printing house, when she is so cruel as to refuse to do it the honour it is so ambitious of. Any day after the Birthday will be equal to me, and if you both condescend, I will beg Lord and Lady Jersey to be so good as to meet you.

LETTER 1701.—Endorsed May 1776.

Are you thunder-struck or laughter-struck with the revolution in the Penetralia¹? Whither shall we go if Lord Solon² and Bishop Plato³ are not perfect enough to form young Montezuma, the future Emperor of America? I hear even Mlle. *Crumb*⁴ is no longer our *Mie*.

Yours most devotedly,

H. W.

1702. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 1, 1776.

MR. GRANGER'S papers have been purchased by Lord Mountstewart, who has the portrait-frenzy as well as I; and, though I am the head of the sect, I have no longer the rage of propagating it, nor would I on any account take the trouble of revising and publishing the MSS. Mr. Granger had drowned his taste for portraits in the ocean of biography; and, though he began with elucidating prints, he at last only sought prints that he might write the lives of those they represented. His work was grown and growing so voluminous, that an abridgement only could have made it useful to collectors.

I am not surprised that you will not assist Dr. Kippis¹: Bishop Laud and William Prynne could never agree. You are very justly more averse to Mr. Masters, who is a pragmatic fellow, and at best troublesome.

If the agate knives you are so good as to recommend to me can be tolerably authenticated, have any royal marks, or,

¹ An allusion to the changes in the establishment of the Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick.

² Lord Holderness, who had resigned the post of Governor to the Princes.

³ Markham, Bishop of Chester, dismissed from his post as Preceptor.

⁴ Mlle. Khrôme, a Swiss Protestant. She was governess to Lady Holderness's daughter until induced

by the Queen to enter the royal service. According to Horace Walpole, the favour at court of Lord and Lady Holderness was indirectly due to this lady's influence.

LETTER 1702.—¹ Andrew Kippis, D.D. (1725–1795), a Nonconformist. He had undertaken to prepare the second edition of the *Biographia Britannica*.

at least, old setting of the time, and will be sold for two guineas, I should not dislike having them, though I have scarce room to stick a knife and fork. But if I trouble you to pay for them, you must let me know all I owe you already, for I know I am in your debt for prints and pamphlets, and this new debt will make the whole considerable enough to be remitted. I have lately purchased three apostle-spoons to add to the one you was so kind as to give me.

What is become of Mr. Essex? does he never visit London? I wish I could tempt him thither or hither. I am not only thinking of building my offices in a collegiate style, for which I have a good design and wish to consult him, but I am actually wanting assistance at this very moment, about a smaller gallery that I wish to add this summer; and which, if Mr. Essex was here, he should build directly. It is scarce worth asking him to take the journey on purpose, though I would pay for his journey hither and back, and would lodge him here for the necessary time. I can only beg you to mention it to him as an idle jaunt, the object is so trifling. I wish more that you could come with him. Do you leave your poor parishioners and their souls to themselves? if you do, I hope Dr. Kippis will seduce them. Adieu! dear Sir.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1703. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 5, 1776.

My letters grow scarce or multiply according as the season is fruitful of events or not. These last days have been very prolific. The freshest incidents, and those that will interest you the most, are from America, and have raised the hopes that a fortnight ago were exceedingly desponding. The provincials have again attempted to

storm Quebec, and been repulsed with great loss by the conduct and bravery of Carleton¹, who, Mr. Conway has all along said, would prove himself a very able general. Succours have since arrived in the town. The remarkable General Lee² is taken prisoner by General Clinton in Carolina; as the Americans say, by his own treachery: however, though the fact is not doubted, as it comes from themselves, the story is very dark. General Howe is arrived safe at Halifax, some say, having been repulsed at New York³. The American Admiral Hopkins, with three or four ships, has been worsted and disgraced by a single frigate⁴. Your Bible, the *Gazette*, will tell you more particulars, I suppose, for I have not yet seen it; and the *à la mains*⁵ of the court have given Howe a victory, and Hopkins chains, which I do not believe will appear in that chronicle; however, you may certainly sing some *Te Deums* in your own chapel.

These triumphs have come on the back of a very singular revolution which has happened in the Penetralia, and made very great noise. Yesterday se'nnight it was declared that the Bishop of Chester⁶ and Mr. Jackson⁷, Preceptor and Sub-preceptor to the Prince of Wales, were dismissed, and that Lord Holderness and Mr. Smelt⁸, Governor and Sub-governor, had resigned their posts; Lord Bruce⁹ and Dr. Hurd¹⁰, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, being named

LETTER 1703.—¹ Afterwards Sir Guy Carleton, Knight of the Bath, and Commander at New York till the Peace. *Walpole*.

² This did not prove true at that time, though it did happen afterwards. *Walpole*.

³ This was not the case.

⁴ The *Glasgow*, commanded by Captain Tyrringham Howe. The engagement took place on April 6, 1776, off the coast of Connecticut.

⁵ Abbreviation of 'nouvelles à la

main.'

⁶ Dr. Markham, afterwards Archbishop of York. *Walpole*.

⁷ Cyril Jackson (1746-1819). He took orders soon after his dismissal, and was Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, 1783-1809.

⁸ Leonard Smelt, Esq. *Walpole*.

⁹ Bruce Brudenel Bruce, youngest brother of the Earl of Cardigan. *Walpole*.

¹⁰ Dr. Hurd was afterwards Bishop of Worcester. *Walpole*.

their successors, and the former declared Earl of Ailesbury. No reason whatever was assigned for so total a change, which did not allay the astonishment. It is now known that on Lord Holderness's return from the south of France he found a great alienation from him in the minds of his royal pupils¹¹, which he attributed to Jackson. This grew so bad, that after vainly complaining of Jackson, and as vainly having obtained reproof, the Bishop, who seemed to be the instigator of the manœuvre and subsequent *disobedience*, was turned out with his instrument, and the Earl saw it hopeless to try to recover his authority. Mr. Smelt, promoted by him, would not survive him. I make no comments—your own mind will suggest alarming reflections on the prospect of a scene that has twice happened since the family came over¹².

What will you say, if out of this change of decoration, another has happened already; yes, already! Lord Bruce, who had taken seisin, retired abruptly into the country, without asking or taking leave. On inquiry where he was and when he would return, his colleague said he had no thoughts of returning. It is said that his mad wife¹³, Mr. Hoare's daughter, had written a piteous letter, promising she should die if deprived of her dear Lord; but must not her dear Lord be as frantic, to quit in so indecent a manner? Have not I told you long that we are all mad? Whence do you think the successor is chosen? From the self-same family. It is the Duke of Montagu.

Here is a short letter, which with any address I might have made a folio; but I content myself with giving you

¹¹ The Prince of Wales, and Prince Frederick, Bishop of Osnaburgh, afterwards Duke of York. *Walpole*.

¹² An allusion to the quarrels in the household of George III when Prince of Wales. See letter to Mann of Dec. 11, 1752.

¹³ Susanna (d. 1783), daughter of Henry Hoare, of Stourhead, Wiltshire; m. (1) Charles Boyle, Viscount Dungarvan (eldest son of fifth Earl of Cork); (2) Thomas Brudenell Bruce, Baron Bruce of Tottenham, afterwards Earl of Ailesbury.

the quintessence of events. My own mind loses every year the roots that hold it to the world. There is little pleasure in thinking, when one has no longer those to whom and with whom one loved to communicate reflections. One's own country becomes another country when the *dramatis personae* are totally changed. Young princes and their favourites only give one a peep into the history of the future world, as if a printer brought one the wet sheets of a book that is to be published after one's death. If one outlives one's friends, it is being but a Strulbrug. Adieu!

1704. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 11, 1776.

I AM grieved, and feel for your gout; I know the vexations and disappointments it occasions, and how often it will return when one thinks it going or gone. It represents life and its vicissitudes. At last I know it makes one content when one does not feel actual pain—and what contents, may be called a blessing: but it is that sort of blessing that extinguishes hopes and views, and is not so luxurious but one can bear to relinquish it. I seek amusements now to amuse me; I used to rush into them, because I had an impulse and wished for what I sought. My want of Mr. Essex has a little of both kinds, and it is for an addition to this place, for which my fondness is not worn out. I shall be very glad to see him here either on the 20th or 21st of this present month, and shall have no engagement till the 23rd, and will gladly pay his journey. I am sorry I must not hope that you will accompany him.

Yours ever,

H. WALPOLE.

1705. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, June 20, 1776.

IF one could resign one's place, without being supposed going into opposition, I should certainly ask my sovereign lady's leave to quit the office of gazetteer; and my motion would be as singular as my practice. Incapacity is my plea, and age the cause. It is a young world, and I neither live in it, nor am acquainted with it. I know nothing worth knowing, I do nothing worth doing—of what can I write?—My old friends die off, I cannot make new, for the fewer ties one has to a world one is going to leave the better. I have been almost alone at Strawberry ever since your Ladyship left town. I came yesterday, and return to-morrow. Had there been any news, I should have heard—nay, perhaps I did, for I called at Mr. Beauclerk's in the evening, where I found Lord Pembroke, Lord Palmerston, Garrick, Burke, the Dean of Derry¹, Lord Robert Spencer, and Mr. Gibbon; but they talked so loud (not the two last), and made such a noise, and Lord Palmerston so much more noise with trying to talk, that it was impossible to know what they said, under the distance of a mile from them. All I did learn was, that Miss Vernon² is not married. I should be very angry if she was, and you had said nothing of it; and that another lady³, who has been on the brink of marrying as many Dukes as the Duchess of Argyll, is not yet Lady Maynard. It is pity; she deserves a peerage as much as most that have got them lately. The Binghamms are incog. at Paris; their letters of recommendation announced them

LETTER 1705.—¹ Dr. Barnard.² Miss Henrietta Vernon married on July 14, 1776 (as his second wife), George Greville, second Earl of Warwick.³ Anne Parsons, known as Mrs. Horton, formerly the mistress of the Duke of Grafton. She married (in June or July 1776) Charles Maynard, second Viscount Maynard.

as my Lord and Lady Lucan⁴, and the patents are still wind-bound.

I smiled at your Ladyship's orders, but I think the person you gave me charge of is in no danger of what you apprehend, unless for debt.

To make this a decent letter, I shall transcribe some lines that I found on my table on Sunday night. I had dined at Lady Blandford's, and the Beauclerks with Mr. Gibbon and Monsieur le Texier had been to drink tea with me in the meantime. The last wrote these lines in a moment, and they are certainly good for impromptus,—

*Si vous aviez scû qu'aujourd'hui
Dût venir dans votre castel
La plus aimable mylady,
Qui n'a nulle autre en son pareil;
Vous n'auriez bougé du céans,
Et sans courir la pretontaine,
Vous auriez attendu cent ans
Plutôt que perdre telle aubaine.
Pourtant dans icelle visite
Nous serions bien désappointés
Sans la bonne Dame Marguerite,
Qui nous a fait d'excellent thé.
Elle a suspendu nos regrets,
Et nous a prouvé comme un livre,
Par ses soins et son sçavoir vivre,
Qu'à tels maîtres sont tels valets.*

I am to have Mr. Essex to-morrow from Cambridge, to try if he can hang me on anywhere another room for Lady Di's drawings. I have turned the little yellow bed-chamber below stairs into a beauty room, with the pictures I bought⁵, along with the Cowley, at Mr. Lovi-

⁴ Sir Charles Bingham was created on July 24, 1776, Baron Lucan of Castlebar, county Mayo.

⁵ Nineteen portraits of persons

prominent at the court of Charles II, copied by Charles Jervas from the originals, and sold with his house at Hampton to Edward Lovibond

bond's sale, but I could not place the drawings there, because I will have a sanctuary for them, not to be shown to all the profane that come to see the house, who in truth almost drive me out of my house. Adieu, Madam, remember this is summer, and that I am Methusalem. He left off writing news when he was past an hundred.

1706. TO COUNT SCHUWALOF.

JE me flatte, M. le Comte, que vous aurez reçu avant cette lettre une petite caisse de Medalions, que j'ai adressée à notre bonne Amie de St. Joseph¹. J'ai dépensé tout votre argent, mais la quantité n'est pas inconsidérable, et cependant il m'en reste encore deux à vous envoyer, que le Marchand avoit oublié, et qu'il ne m'a remis, qu'après la Caisse partie. Parmi celles que vous avez, il y a une tête en profile de My Lord Chatham, que vous reconnoîtrez très facilement. Si vous êtes content de mes soins, n'oserai-
[je] pas me flatter que vous voulez bien me faire l'honneur d'être votre commissionnaire? Il me sera bien sensible d'avoir occasion de vous faire souvenir de moi. Ce n'est point assurément que vous ne m'ayez bien trop distingué par la place que vous m'avez destinée dans certain Portrait précieux que je n'ai pas la hardiesse de montrer. Mon estampe sera encore trop glorieuse si vous lui faites l'honneur de la garder dans votre chambre; mais jamais je n'aurai le front de me faire encadrer avec Vous. Vous me privez de l'honneur de me vanter d'avoir votre portrait, et je vous supplie de ne pas attribuer à la fausse modestie ma répugnance à occuper une place aussi honorable, et qui n'est

(1724-1775), son of a Director of the East India Company. Lovibond wrote poetry and contributed to the *World*.

LETTER 1706.—Not in C.; reprinted

verbatim et liberatim from facsimile in Lescure's *Correspondance de la Marquise du Deffand*, vol. ii. pp. 560-1.

¹ Madame du Deffand.

pas faite pour un petit Homme comme moi, qui n'ai jamais rien fait de meritoire. Votre Portrait serait deprecie à cause de l'accessoire. Si vous me fachez, je vous ferai tenir à la main le Cardinal de Richelieu, aussi Indigne d'être votre Associé que ne l'est,

Mons^r le Comte,
votre tres devouè Serviteur

De Strawberry Hill, ce 23 Juin 1776. HORACE WALPOLE.

1707. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 25, 1776.

I ASSURE you, my dear Madam, that it is no idleness that dictates my excuses. It would be my greatest satisfaction to be able to entertain every minute you could bestow on me; nor is my nature idle; but my summers are so solitary, or passed in such insipid company, my age weans me so much from the young and active world, and I care so little what it does, that I cannot write letters, without feeling that they want an apology. When I find I grow old, would it not be strange vanity to imagine that others do not perceive it? I never had parts that could afford to be diminished, and it is honest to give one's friends warning when the crack is begun. But I hate to talk of myself, even on the depreciating side, though much more excusable than its contrary. I have given you notice: you shall know everything I hear worth telling you; but I cannot make brick with my Lady Greenwich's gazettes.

I am extremely pleased with the new Countess of Warwick, though I think the Earl might have made a more suitable match without wandering out of the family¹.

LETTER 1707.—¹ Horace Walpole probably refers to Lord Ossory's own

sister, Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick, married in 1779 to the Earl of Shelburne.

I can easily conceive why a notable aunt² did not think so. Before your Ladyship's letter arrived, I had heard of a mysterious and very private party on the water, which left me no doubt. There was only Lady Notable, Miss Vernon, the Earl, and his brother. On perceiving they were seen, the ladies held down their heads, and Miss Vernon landed with her hood quite down over her face. How certain should we be of governing the peer, if we could have persuaded him to steal his bride! for you know, Madam, one always governs those one has cunningly made marry. Pray continue your goodness to the two other sisters, that they may spitefully be matched to dukes; or was it to show more consummate address than another protectress? Forgive me if I suspect that it was not mere kindness to the bride that operated the service, though I hope it will prove real happiness to her, who is so intitled to it.

I heard t'other day, from very good authority, that all Ireland is *America mad*—that was the expression. It was answered, 'So is all the Continent.' Is it not odd that this island should, for the first time since it was five years old, be the only country in Europe in its senses?

The case is, England was never governed by Scotland before, where a very profound author has pronounced the wisest heads in Christendom grow; and yet the Scots do not love that author with all his impartiality. Yours, Madam, &c.,

DUNCE SCOTUS.

P.S. I have just been told a good story of the Duchess of Queensberry. She dined at the Dean of Lincoln's³ with

² Most likely the Duchess of Bedford, aunt of the Miss Vernons and of Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick.

³ Hon. and Rev. James Yorke (d. 1808), fifth son of first Earl of Hardwicke; Dean of Lincoln, 1762–

much company. After dinner, the ladies retiring, found themselves shut into a drawing-room without any convenience, and with but one door. When they could keep their patience no longer, the Duchess, opening the door into the parlour, said, 'Mr. Dean, you have given us an admirable dinner, good wine, and an excellent dessert, but you must remember that we are not residentiaries.'

I enclose a letter of another Duchess, which is not much inferior to her epistle to Foote. I believe you may trust to its being genuine, for I received it from Italy.

My lock of hay begs its respects to your hay mountains, and hopes they are in a fair way.

2nd P.S. Though your Ladyship would persuade me to cast my slough, I assure you I am not without flatterers of another sort, who encourage me in my Tom-Hearneality. I have just received a poem called *Wittenham Hill*, in which I am hailed as a father of ancient lore,

What means (O! for a Walpole's antique skill!)

What means the milk-white cross on yonder hill!

I can but laugh at my own party-coloured life—sometimes at Paris, and an editor of Grammont; sometimes playing all night at pharaoh with Madame de Mirepoix, or at loo with a greater favourite; now writing fables for Lady Anne, and verses for the Graces; then accused as a plotting republican; while, at best, the truth is, as I told the late Lord Holland when I set up my printing press,

Some have at first for wits, then poets past,

Turn'd printers next, and prov'd plain fools at last.

3rd P.S. They are so amazed and charmed at Paris with Lady Bingham's miniatures, that the Duke of Orléans has

given her a room at the Palais Royal to copy which of his pictures she pleases. The Queen, on the Duc d'Aiguillon's losing his only daughter, begged of the King to permit him to go wherever he pleases, except to court, with positive command never to appear there. This shows her Majesty's power; and Mr. Falkener⁴, who has just returned from Italy through France, told me last night that it is generally believed M. de Choiseul will be replaced; that they have thirty-six ships ready, and are even pressing carpenters into the service. What a prospect! Who will at last be the America-mad?

4th P. S. Pray do not give a copy of the Duchess's letter; for I have no ill-will to her, and do not want to spread her follies.

MA CHERE AMIE,

Calais, le 26 Avril, 1776⁵.

J'ai l'honneur de vous annoncer que les *Pères* ont decidez que la sentence de la Cour Chrétienne ne devoit pas justifier le mariage que j'ai contracté avec le Duc de Kingston. Ils ont dishonorez la Cour Ecclesiastique dont les dogmes ont été suivis inviolablement pendant 1475 années. En detruisant cette cour de justice je suis la malheureuse sacrifice, mais ils ne peuvent enlever mon bien, ils n'ont pas ordonner pour me punir que de leur faire la reverence. Ce fut tout pour le public, mais vis-à-vis de vous, ma chère amie, je vous confesse que je reste dans un étonnement sans egale. L'ame frémit contre l'injustice, qu'on ma faite. J'espère que si vous voulez penser à moi, vous serez persuadée que j'ai resistée pendant 20 années à accepter la main du Duc de Kingston. Scachant que le Comte de Bristol d'à present, autrefois Mr. Hervey, pretendoit avoir des droits sur moi,

⁴ William Augustus Fawkener, eldest son of Sir Everard Fawkener, Knight; Envoy to Lisbon, 1786; to Florence, 1787; to St. Petersburg, 1790. He was also Clerk to the Privy Council.

⁵ Enclosed in the previous letter, but hitherto printed separately.

(See *Notes and Queries*, Aug. 4, 1900.) Vernon Smith, who first printed this letter in his edition of Walpole's *Letters to Lady Ossory*, gives the following note:—'The spelling of this letter is as in the original, which is in Kirgate's handwriting.'

je ne l'auroit pas dans un âge plus avancé risquée, j'ai donc pris le parti de me marier qu'avec la permission de l'archevêque et la sentence de la Cour Ecclesiastique que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous montrer.

Mon intention estoit pour le moins aussi bonne que mon sort est malheureux. Je suis donc, ma chère amie, dans la Cour Ecclesiastique reconnue pour Duchesse de Kingston, avec les *Pères* comme Comtesse de Bristol. En ligne directe de ma propre maison il y a 350 ans, et pour les pas je les ayant toujours cedez à ceux qui vouloit les accepter—la grandeur et les richesses ne sont pour moi que des embarras.

Je vous embrasse, et je suis de cœur et d'ame,
 ma chère amie, toujours à vous,
 ELIZABETH, DUCHESSE DE KINGSTON.

Aussitot que la sentence fut passée je me suis embarqué pour Calais, car ces bons messieurs avoient desin de me retenir en Angleterre par un loi qu'on nomme a *ne exeat regno*, mais m'étant sauvé il n'est plus question de ce malheur la! Je vous prie d'assurer le Prince Connestable de mes respects, et de même au deux Princes Cardinaux.

1708. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1776.

I WAS very glad to receive your letter, not only because always most glad to hear of you, but because I wished to write to you, and had absolutely nothing to say till I had something to answer. I have lain but two nights in town since I saw you; have been, else, constantly here, very much employed, though doing, hearing, knowing exactly nothing. I have had a Gothic architect from Cambridge to design me a gallery, which will end in a mouse, that is, in an hexagon closet of seven feet diameter. I have been making a beauty room, which was effected by buying two dozen of small copies of Sir Peter Lely, and hanging them up; and I have been making hay, which

is not made, because I put it off for three days, as I chose it should adorn the landscape when I was to have company, and so the rain is come, and has drowned it. However, as I can even turn calculator when it is to comfort me for not minding my interest, I have discovered that it is five to one better for me that my hay should be spoiled than not ; for, as the cows will eat it if it is damaged, which horses will not, and as I have five cows and but one horse, is not it plain that the worse my hay is, the better? Do not you with your refining head go, and, out of excessive friendship, find out something to destroy my system. I had rather be a philosopher than a rich man ; and yet have so little philosophy, that I had much rather be content than be in the right.

Mr. Beauclerk and Lady Di have been here four or five days—so I had both content and exercise for my philosophy. I wish Lady Ailesbury was as fortunate ! The Pembrokes, Churchills, Le Texier, as you will have heard, and the Garricks have been with us. Perhaps, if alone, I might have come to you ; but you are all too healthy and harmonious. I can neither walk nor sing ; nor, indeed, am fit for anything but to amuse myself in a sedentary trifling way. What I have most certainly not been doing, is writing anything : a truth I say to you, but do not desire you to repeat. I deign to satisfy scarce anybody else. Whoever reported that I was writing anything, must have been so totally unfounded, that they either blundered by guessing without reason, or knew they lied—and that could not be with any kind intention ; though saying I am going to do what I am not going to do is wretched enough. Whatever is said of me without truth, anybody is welcome to believe that pleases.

In fact, though I have scarce a settled purpose about anything, I think I shall never write any more. I have

written a great deal too much, unless I had written better, and I know I should now only write still worse. One's talent, whatever it is, does not improve at near sixty—yet, if I liked it, I dare to say a good reason would not stop my inclination;—but I am grown most indolent in that respect, and most absolutely indifferent to every purpose of vanity. Yet without vanity I am become still prouder and more contemptuous. I have a contempt for my countrymen that makes me despise their approbation. The applause of slaves and of the foolish mad is below ambition. Mine is the haughtiness of an ancient Briton, that cannot write what would please this age, and would not, if he could.

Whatever happens in America, this country is undone. I desire to be reckoned of the last age, and to be thought to have lived to be superannuated, preserving my senses only for myself and for the few I value. I cannot aspire to be traduced like Algernon Sydney, and content myself with sacrificing to him amongst my lares. Unalterable in my principles, careless about most things below essentials, indulging myself in trifles by system, annihilating myself by choice, but dreading folly at an unseemly age, I contrive to pass my time agreeably enough, yet see its termination approach without anxiety. This is a true picture of my mind; and it must be true, because drawn for you, whom I would not deceive, and could not, if I would. Your question on my being writing drew it forth, though with more seriousness than the report deserved—yet talking to one's dearest friend is neither wrong nor out of season. Nay, you are my best apology. I have always contented myself with your being perfect, or, if your modesty demands a mitigated term, I will say, unexceptionable. It is comical, to be sure, to have always been more solicitous about the virtue of one's friend than about one's own; yet, I repeat

it, you are my apology—though I never was so unreasonable as to make you answerable for my faults in return; I take them wholly to myself. But enough of this. When I know my own mind, for hitherto I have settled no plan for my summer, I will come to you. Adieu!

1709. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1776.

WARS and rumours of wars! Is your Bedfordshire militia ready, Madam? The Duc de Chartres is at Cales, and even the stocks, who hitherto have been as dull as the country gentlemen, begin not to like it. The Duke of Richmond, who is returned, thinks Maurepas will keep off the war as long as he can, and yet the Duke owns the preparations are prodigious; and that Spain has insisted on this armament. Do they humour her in an armament, and yet mean nothing by it? Where have we an army, except of Irish peers¹?

When is Henrietta² to take possession of Warwick Castle? Is a dun cow to be roasted whole, or boiled in Guy's caldron? Lady Powis is gone for such an exploit on her son's coming of age. This is all I know upon earth, but that my hay is a perfect water souchy, and my roses and orange-flowers all drowned; and I am such a heathen, that I am more sorry for my nosegays than my revenue. Have you had but a Patriot court? that is, a thin one? You see I am disposed, Madam, to pay my *quit-rents*, though I have but a pepper-corn; but we that know nothing, can say nothing. Jemmy Brudenel³, no doubt, can write volumes full of matter—happy man, say I.

LETTER 1709.—¹ Thirty Irish peers had recently been created.

² Miss Henrietta Vernon.

³ Hon. James Brudenell, afterwards Earl of Cardigan, Master of the Robes to the King.

He dwells amidst the royal family,
 And can of *all* our Harries, *all* our Edwards talk⁴
 of whom, thank Heaven! there is a tolerable quantity.
 I shall be much better company when the French land;
 though, as I have a little money in the stocks, to be sure
 it will not be very pleasant. Adieu! Madam; write to me,
 that I may have something to answer at least.

1710. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, July 13, 1776.

WHEN the wind blows, wait for the echo. If your Ladyship believes all you read in the papers, I humbly pity you. Instead of crediting a quarter, I have the honour to think that there is little but lies in the accounts from America. I see regiments and ships sending every day, as if the ministers thought they had not half force enough there, though by their own accounts the business will be over before those that are going can pack up a nightcap. Instead of the war being near at an end, I believe we are going to have two more; and as our army is in America, I hope France and Spain will be so punctilious as to go thither after it. If they have not given assurances they will, there does not seem much sense in sending every man out of the kingdom, unless as an excuse for non-resistance. However, as nothing is so fallible as conjectures built on reasoning, I choose to pin my faith on firmer ground. I dreamt that Lord Guilford was sent to the Congress, that the leaders immediately accepted pensions and Irish peerages, and that their wives instantly hoisted pyramids of feathers on their heads to show that their hearts were entirely English. I give you my word this dream is true, and I prefer it to the *Gazette* itself.

⁴ Pope, *Sat.* viii. ll. 103, 105 adapted.

Thus much for my political faith: now to answer your questions, Madam. What am I doing? Strictly speaking, nothing: yet, according to the expressive old adage, I am as busy as a hen and one chick. I am obeying the Gospel, and putting my house in order, am ranging my prints and papers, am *composing* books, in the literal sense, and in the only sense I will compose books any more. I am pasting Henry Bunbury's¹ prints into a volume; and as man is a contradiction, I am setting my house in order against I leave it—and yet am building a new room. I do not go to Bristol, for Lady Laura² is recovered, and I shall go for a few days to Brighthelmstone, because I am not recovered, and want the sea air to recover that strength I never had, and is not all returned. Surely there is enough of myself!

Truly I know not whether the young Prince is inoculated or not. I suppose, as Pope says of Selkirk, 'if I live I shall love him,' but as yet he has not taken up an inch in my thoughts, which have vast difficulty in extending their affections to babes and sucklings. Even princes of fourteen³ do not enter into my litany. And this leads to another of your Ladyship's questions. Windsor is not the great castle, but its footstool, the small house where Queen Anne used to take a cheerful glass with Lady Masham. It is whispered that change of air has been recommended. Nay, the lookers-out are full of I know not what visions, presented to their wicked imaginations by certain rays that have flashed out of the cloud that lately hung over the A-B-C-dario. *Bons mots* are quoted worthy of young Ammon in his nonage. Another chimera is, that there is a visible

LETTER 1710.—¹ Henry William Bunbury (1750–1811), second son of Rev. Sir William Bunbury, fifth Baronet. He presented one of his drawings ('Richmond Hill') to Horace

Walpole.

² Lady Laura Waldegrave.

³ The Prince of Wales was nearly fourteen.

atrophy and wasting. Now for my part, I am determined not to build any views on a fourth reign, like those late seers the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Bolingbroke; because, if I should have the misfortune to survive to that period, I should probably be as much a child as I was when I was presented to George I, and therefore I declare I will never hear a word of politics under George IV.

I came to town last night on a little business, and return to-morrow. The Duchess of Bristol was seen yesterday in this very town. More this deponent saith not.

One word more, on our old quarrel, and I have done. *Such letters* as mine! I will tell you a fact, Madam, in answer to that phrase. On Mr. Chute's death, his executor sent me a bundle of letters he had kept of mine, for above thirty years. I took the trouble to read them over, and I bless my stars they were as silly, insipid things, as ever I don't desire to see again. I thought when I was young and had great spirits, that I had some parts too, but now I have seen it under my own hand that I had not, I will never believe it under anybody's hand else; and so I bid you good night.

1711. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 16, 1776.

You will think I have been less periodically punctual than usual, but appearances only are against me, for I wrote to you a week ago by a person that is gone to Italy, though the Lord knows when you will receive it; nor is it much matter, for I had nothing new to tell you, and write now only out of decorum. To be sure every day may produce news from America, but nothing has come since my last. I wish the probability of news may not be opened at a new war-office. The vast preparations in France, exacted as

they pretend by Spain, and not much more comfortable for that, either announce war, may beget it, or at least can easily be blown into a flame. Why we should tempt it, and yet not expect it, is a problem not soluble by my old-fashioned head.

The Duchess of Bristol¹ is returned—to avoid outlawry. The Earl, whom she has made a dowager, talks, and seems to act resolution of being divorced; and the Ecclesiastical Court, who has been as great a whore as either of them, affects to be ashamed, and thunders against the Duchess. In the meantime the Meadowses² prosecute the Earl for the whole receipt of the Kingston estate, as her Grace is his Countess. People cry out that the House of Lords cannot grant a divorce after such symptoms of collusion. I beg their pardons; I do not know what the House of Lords cannot do.

Will you take this for a letter? It will, at least, do to keep a place for its predecessor, which was more portly, if not more substantial. If I would stoop to artifice, I could insert a list of so many new Irish lords, that there would be no room to sign my name. But what would you care for a bead-roll of mushrooms, half of whom, like your procession-nobility at Florence³, will not be gentlemen under a generation or two? They are like the Lord Bateman, whom George I made an Irish peer, to avoid making him a Knight of the Bath; for, said he, 'I can make him a lord, but I cannot make him a gentleman.' Nay, all these earls and barons may be well born for aught I know, but their very number makes them a mob—they are thirty.

What is become of Mrs. Anne Pitt? Lady Lucy Mann, I trust, was in less danger than her husband apprehended.

LETTER 1711.—¹ The Duchess of Kingston. *Walpole*.

² Nephews of the Duke of Kingston by his only sister, Lady Frances Pierpoint, wife of Mr. Meadows,

second son of Sir Philip. *Walpole*.

³ Citizens ennobled at Florence are allowed to rank as nobles only at processions, till the third generation. *Walpole*.

I have a high opinion of the sea, and am going to try its air myself, for I have not recovered my feet quite yet, and always found singular benefit from sea-breezes, which are all I shall try now, and on shore. One ought to try, though one must not imagine that strength is to return, when one is no boy, as it used to do. I have no such impertinent presumption, and always submit with profound deference to whatever penalties years impose, or that tyrant, the gout. Age has still its comforts. They who disdain them, and insist upon pleasures, do not understand their own interest. The most grievous part of old age is the loss of old friends: they have no succedaneum. Adieu!

17th.

The Duchess of Newcastle⁴ died this morning, aged seventy-five. She was perfectly well on Monday night, when she went to bed, was seized between two and three with an apoplexy and total loss of sense, and expired at eleven to-day. I just mention deaths of those you remember. To myself I seem Methuselem, for I can scarcely reckon twenty of those who formed *the world* when I came into it; but, indeed, as my father was minister, I came into it at five years old. Sometimes I think this my second life, so totally is everything changed.

I did flatter myself with being diverted at your surprise from so general an alteration of persons, objects, manners, as you would have found; but there is an end of all that pleasing vision! I remember when my father went out of place, and was to return visits, which ministers are excused from doing, he could not guess where he was, finding himself in so many new streets and squares. This was thirty years ago. They have been building ever since,

⁴ Lady Henrietta Godolphin, eldest daughter of the second Earl of Go-

dolphin, by Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough. *Walpole*.

and one would think had imported two or three capitals. London could put Florence into its fob-pocket ; but as they build so slightly, if they did not rebuild, it would be just the reverse of Rome, a vast circumference of city surrounding an area of ruins. As its present progress is chiefly north, and Southwark marches south, the metropolis promises to be as broad as long. Rows of houses shoot out every way like a polypus ; and, so great is the rage of building everywhere, that, if I stay here a fortnight, without going to town, I look about to see if no new house is built since I went last. America and France must tell us how long this exuberance of opulence is to last ! The East Indies, I believe, will not contribute to it much longer. Babylon and Memphis and Rome probably, stared at their own downfall. Empires did not use to philosophize, nor thought much but of themselves. Such revolutions are better known now, and we ought to expect them—I do not say we do. This little island will be ridiculously proud some ages hence of its former brave days, and swear its capital was once as big again as Paris, or—what is to be the name of the city that will then give laws to Europe—perhaps New York or Philadelphia.

1712. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 17, 1776.

THE enclosed is a charming copy of verses of Voltaire, at least the first part, and *sent bien son ancienne verve*. What a beautiful and pathetic line is

Rit des calamités dont pleurent les provinces,

and how applicable in every Paris ! and how applicable just now !

This is not my only business, Madam ; I beg you will

send me a recommendatory letter to Mons. Hubert¹ for Mr. Hardinge², Lord Camden's nephew, who is going a trip to Geneva. You may truly say he is a very clever, amiable young man, a rising chancellor, if the amiable were rising to be chancellors; and if you like to exaggerate, you may add that he will taste and understand Mons. Hubert, neither of which I believe, no more than if he was the present chancellor; and yet he has taken to me, who am as unlike anything he has seen at the Temple, or on the circuit, as Mons. Hubert, with much less talents. No matter; pray oblige me.

I dined yesterday with Princess Amelie, with the Lords and Ladies Holderness, Spencer, Weymouth, the Lords Hertford and Ashburnham, the Ladies Anne Howard, Mary Coke, and Margaret Compton, Mrs. Howe, and Mr. Morrice. We had the finest fruit in the world, I mean in a world where there is fifty times more rain than sun, very little wine, and three long pools at commerce; you may guess if Lord Weymouth was well diverted. Lord and Lady Carmarthen were to have been there, but the Duchess of Newcastle has had a stroke of apoplexy, and lies senseless. As I came home, two footpads, just at the entrance of my own Twickenham, stepped up to my footman on horseback, damned him and bid him stop. Luckily it was not David, but the young fellow, who rode up to the coachman and bid him drive on; and so we shall not make a paragraph in the

LETTER 1712.—¹ Jean Huber (d. about 1790), a native of Geneva. He had artistic tastes, and was particularly clever in cutting out likenesses with scissors.

² George Hardinge (1743–1816), son of Nicholas Hardinge, Clerk of the House of Commons, by Jane, daughter of Sir John Pratt, and sister of Lord Camden; Solicitor-General to the Queen, 1782; Attorney-General to the Queen, 1794;

Senior Justice of the counties of Brecon, Glamorgan, and Radnor, 1787–1816. Hardinge was known to Horace Walpole as early as 1770, when their correspondence (first published in Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes and Illustrations of Literature*) began. After Hardinge's marriage in 1777 he went to live at Twickenham, in a small house called Ragman's Castle.

newspapers. I expected to hear a pistol calling after us, but the lad saw nothing but a large stick, which one of them held up at him. I shall not send him to America after Lord Winchelsea for his spirit³.

1713. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

You are so good to me, my dear Sir, that I am quite ashamed. I must not send back your charming present, but wish you would give me leave to pay for it, and I shall have the same obligation to you, and still more. It is beautiful in form and colours, and pleases me excessively. In the meantime, I have, in a great hurry, for I came home but at noon to meet Mr. Essex, chosen out a few prints for you, such as I think you will like, and beg you to accept them: they enter into no one of my sets.

I am heartily grieved at your account of yourself, and know no comfort but submission. I was absent to see General Conway, who is far from well—we must take our lot as it falls! Joy and sorrow is mixed till the scene closes. I am out of spirits, and shall not mend yours; Mr. Essex is just setting out, and I write in great haste, but am, as I have long been,

Most truly yours,

Strawberry Hill, July 23, 1776.

H. W.

1714. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 24, 1776.

I WROTE to you yesterday, dear Sir, not only in great haste, but in great confusion, and did not say half I ought to have done for the pretty vase you sent me, and for your constant obliging attention to me. All I can say is, that gratitude attempted, even in my haste and concern, to put

³ Lord Winchelsea was a volunteer with the King's army in America.

in its word : and I did not mean to pay you (which I hope you will really allow me to do), but to express my sensibility of your kindness.

The fact was, that to avoid disappointing Mr. Essex, when I had dragged him hither from Cambridge, I had returned hither precipitately, and yet late, from Park Place, whither I went the day before to see General Conway, who has had a little attack of the paralytic kind. You, who can remember how very long and dearly I have loved so near a relation and particular friend, and who are full of nothing but gentle and friendly sensations, can judge how shocked I was to find him more changed than I expected. I suffered so much in constraining and commanding myself, that I was not sorry, as the house was full of relations, to have the plea of Mr. Essex, to get away, and come to sigh here by myself. It is, perhaps, to vent my concern that I write now. Mr. Conway is in no manner of danger, is better, his head nor speech are affected, and the physicians, who barely allow the attack to be of the paralytic nature, are clear it is local in the muscles of the face. Still has it operated such a revolution in my mind, as no time, *at my age*, can efface. It has at once damped every pursuit which my spirits had even now prevented me from being weaned from, I mean of virtù. It is like a mortal distemper in myself, for can amusements amuse, if there is but a glimpse, a vision, of outliving one's friends? I have had dreams, in which I thought I wished for fame—it was not certainly posthumous fame at any distance ; I feel, I feel it was confined to the memory of those I love. It seems to me impossible for a man who has no friends to do anything for fame—and to me the first position in friendship is, to intend one's friends should survive one—but it is not reasonable to oppress you, who are suffering gout, with my melancholy ideas. Let me know as you mend. What I have said will tell you, what

I hope so many years have told you, that I am very constant and sincere to friends of above forty years.

I doubt Mr. Essex perceived that my mind was greatly bewildered. He gave me a direction to Mr. Penticross¹, who, I recollect, Mr. Gray, not you, told me was turned a Methodist teacher. He was a Blue-coat boy, and came hither then to some of my servants, having at that age a poetic turn. As he has reverted to it, I hope the enthusiasm will take a more agreeable plie. I have not heard of him for many years, and thought he was settled somewhere near Cambridge: I find it is at Wallingford. I wonder those madmen and knaves do not begin to wear out, as their folly is no longer new, and as knavery can turn its hand to any trade, according to the humour of the age, which in countries like this is seldom constant.

Yours most faithfully,

H. W.

1715. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, Aug. 4, 1776.

I SHALL not go to Park Place till the day after to-morrow, having allowed this interval in hopes of finding a greater amendment. I am glad to find everybody thinks I was too much alarmed. The King said he heard it was a very slight attack, but that I was extremely shocked. I am not at all ashamed of being thought too sensible about my friends.

I do not wonder Mr. C. is so gay. I suppose this *fine season* has raised his spirits. They say it has done Lord G. Germaine great good.

I am still less surprised to hear Lord —— said Mr. Conway could not open his eye without help.

I have seen the man that saw that wondrous sight,

LETTER 1714.—¹ A clergyman and schoolmaster.

and should not be surprised if he said he had *seen a comet drop down hail*.

The charade is much better than what I guessed ; it is the word *Italien*. Though you do not understand Latin, Madam, you know that *ita* is Latin, and *lien* French,—but perhaps you don't understand French neither.

Pray tell *our* Lord that I found last night, in Dr. King's¹ Works, that Archbishop Laud *or* Sir John Robinson, who I think was our Lord's grandfather, left 100*l*. to whoever would translate Laud's book against Fisher² into Latin. I hope the Prelate's self-love was the donor, and not the martial gentleman in the parlour. There is a great deal of the petty history of Queen Anne's reign in that Dr. King's Works, and yet it requires my perseverance to read three volumes of small print, in which is so much trash. The man had some sense, a great deal more reading, and some humour, but the latter is very vulgar, and pertly vulgar, the worst sort ; and oftener fails than succeeds. Then it is the humour of a bigot, who always laughs when he is ill-humoured, and who thinks he must be comical, if the Bible is on his side, for what really makes a bigot laugh is, that he flatters himself his adversary will be damned. King was besides a jester on the side of Sacheverel and against liberty, in an age when our ancestors had too much sense to be joked into slavery. I am not surprised that this new edition of his works is published now : his humour, though stale, has a better chance of success than even when it was fresh. His biographer says he was sullen, morose, peevish, said many ill-natured things, was drunken, religious, and strictly virtuous, a complete character of a High Church

LETTER 1715.—¹ William King, LL.D. (1685-1763), Principal of St. Mary Hall, Oxford, 1719-63. He was at the head of the Jacobite party in Oxford.

² John Fisher (1579-1641), a Jesuit.

He disputed on the Catholic faith with Laud in the presence of James I. Laud and Fisher afterwards wrote pamphlets referring to this conference.

saint! To prevent your dipping into his verses, I will advertise you that he was an execrable poet, and at the end of his first volume recommends a republication of fifty thousand verses still more wretched than his own; at the same time advising a translation of our poets into Latin, to give foreigners an idea of our poetry! I beg your Ladyship's pardon for saying so much on a trumpery author, but I have no news, and he was new to me.

1716. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 11, 1776.

I HAVE so little to tell you, though, perhaps, at the eve of so much, that I shall, I think, only begin this letter to show you the constancy of my attention, but not send it till it is fuller.

You have seen by the public newspapers that General Carleton has driven the provincials out of all Canada. It is well he fights better than he writes! General Conway has constantly said that he would do great service. The provincials revenge themselves on our ships, took nine Jamaica-men at once, and have just taken two transports with troops; besides half or three quarters starving our West India Islands. General Howe has left Halifax since the beginning of June, on an expedition. Near a fortnight ago, he was heard of off New York, and great anxiety was afloat to know farther. Yesterday came letters that he had landed on an island¹ near, without molestation, but learnt that the opposite coast was covered with an hundred cannon, behind which lay a strong army entrenched up to their eyes. This does not diminish the anxiety for the event. His brother, the peer, had not joined him; not that there are appearances promising negotiation. The

LETTER 1716.—¹ Staten Island.

Congress has declared all the provinces independent², has condemned the Mayor of New York to be hanged for corresponding with their enemies, and have seized Franklin, not the famous doctor, but one of the King's governors. I hope this savage kind of war will not proceed; but they seem to be very determined, and that makes the prospect very melancholy.

I have been much alarmed lately about General Conway, who, by a sudden cold, had something of a paralytic stroke in the face; but as it did not affect his speech or health, and is almost disappeared, I am much easier. I do not know whether I have not mentioned it to you already: I cannot always remember from one post to another what I have said. He is uneasy himself, with reason, about his daughter. Her husband³ and his two brothers have contracted a debt—one can scarcely expect to be believed out of England—of seventy thousand pounds! Who but must think himself happy to marry a daughter with only ten thousand pounds to a young man with five thousand pounds a year rent-charge in present, and twenty-two thousand a year settled? And yet this daughter at present is ruined! Her behaviour is such as her father's would be; she does not only not complain, but desires her very own jewels may be sold. The young men of this age seem to have made a law amongst themselves for declaring their fathers superannuated at fifty, and then dispose of the estates, as if already their own.

How culpable to society was Lord Holland⁴ for setting an example of paying such enormous, such gigantic debts! Can you believe that Lord Foley's two sons⁵ have borrowed

² The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776.

³ John Damer, eldest son of Joseph, Lord Milton, married Anne, only child of General Henry Seymour Conway. *Walpole*.

⁴ Henry Fox, first Lord Holland. *Walpole*.

⁵ Thomas and Edward, sons of the first Lord Foley of that line. *Walpole*.

money so extravagantly, that the interest they have contracted to pay amounts to eighteen thousand pounds a year? I write the sum at length, lest you should think I have mistaken, and set down two or three figures too much. The legislature sits quiet, and says it cannot put a stop to such outrageous doings; but thus is it punished for winking at the plunder of the Indies, which cannot suffice. Our Jews and usurers contrive to lounge at home, and commit as much rapine as Lord Clive!

Wednesday, 14th.

I must desire you to send me a letter to Mr. William Suckling, our deputy, desiring him to execute the office of collector for you, and pay our moneys to my brother and me. This is not essential, but I find it will be a satisfaction to him, and I know you will be so good as to do it. Now I will bid you good night, but will reserve the rest of my paper a few days, rather than leave you in this suspense. If nothing comes soon, I shall hope some negotiation is on foot that will stop the effusion of blood—but indeed such various frenzies have taken hold of the nation's brains, that I fear nothing but calamities will bring us to our senses.

As I doubt whether we shall hear any considerable news soon, I have determined to send away this letter, lest it should be superannuated. The *Gazette* has already got the start of it, and told you all it pretended to tell. In truth, my letters are little more than companions of the newspapers, or at best evidences for their veracity, which *they* want. It is incredible how both sides lie about the American war. Even that laconic personage the *Gazette* has been known to fib, and always takes care not to tell a syllable of bad news. I live here alone, and never hear any but with all the world. Whenever this war shall end, I believe it will be very new; for except two or three great facts,



Lord Clive
from a painting by Nathaniel Dance, R.A.

I question whether we, the public, know anything of the matter.

1717. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 16, 1776.

I CANNOT answer your Ladyship's questions from any Parisian authority, for my dear old woman, who does not trouble her head about the court, seldom tells me anything but what relates to her own circle. I have heard here of the favour of my Lady Lucan, and having the same curiosity as your Ladyship, have inquired, but the answer is not come. I know still less of Lord Clermont's¹ successor: it certainly is not Lord Dillon's son², who is marrying Miss Phipps, for love, at Brussels. He has a cousin at Paris, a beau Dillon³, and a fine dancer. If Lady Lucan has made such a conquest by her painting, I think I, who was her master, ought at least to be a minister.—But I doubt my fate will resemble me to some prince, I forget whom, whose tomb they show at Westminster Abbey, who was son, brother, uncle, and father of kings, but never was king himself⁴.

No, Madam, I shall not go to Brighthelmstone, but another journey that will at least vary the scene a little, for Lady Di. I have asked my nephew's leave to show them Houghton, and to Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury.

LETTER 1717.—¹ William Henry Fortescue (1722–1806), first Baron Clermont, created Earl of Clermont in 1777.

² Hon. Charles Dillon, afterwards Dillon-Lee (1745–1813), eldest son of eleventh Viscount Dillon, whom he succeeded in 1782; m. (1776) Hon. Henrietta Maria Phipps, daughter of first Baron Mulgrave.

³ Colonel Édouard Dillon (1751–1839), son of a banker in Bordeaux; Colonel of the regiment of Provence, and Gentleman-in-Waiting to the

Comte d'Artois. He was a favourite of Marie Antoinette.

⁴ The personage who appears to answer this description most nearly is Edmund Plantagenet (1246–1296), surnamed 'Crouchback,' Earl of Lancaster, who is buried on the north side of the Sanctuary in Westminster Abbey, nearest the high altar. He was son of Henry III, brother of Edward I, uncle of Edward II, and great-great-grandfather of Henry IV.

I do not speak positively, you perceive. I must have permission first.

You may be sure I enter very much, Madam, into your sensations about Miss Vernon's trip to Winterslow Lodge, and approve your consenting to it. One cannot hinder others from doing what one wishes they did not, when they are not in the wrong for doing it; and yet I know one still wishes it did not happen. You can meet with nobody that feels this more than I do; but one must conquer oneself on those occasions. It is difficult, I own; but as nobody feels exactly what one feels oneself upon all situations, it is not reasonable to prescribe rules to them from one's own disposition: and yet, though I preach, I admire your fortitude in not having wanted to be preached to; nor is the preacher always so equitable himself. I am sorry you are losing Mr. James. I know what a loss it is to miss a person whose opinions agree with one's own. I will not preach on this chapter too, for I am sure my practice would not be conformable to my doctrine.

Mr. Conway is visibly much mended; and though my impatience is not satisfied yet, in all probability no traces of his disorder will remain. His countenance is quite come to itself; and his disposition was so little disturbed, that in one of the rainy days I passed there, he employed all the morning in cleaning his own boat. He is as indifferent about the accident, and talks of it with as much unconcern as if he had only been out on a skirmishing party.

Friday, 16th.

I began this yesterday, and was interrupted. To-day I have heard the shocking news of Mr. Damer's death, who shot himself yesterday, at three o'clock in the morning, at a tavern in Covent Garden. My first alarm was for Mr. Conway; not knowing what effect such a horrid

surprise would have on him, scarce recovered from an attack himself; happily it proves his nerves were not affected, for I have had a very calm letter from him on the occasion. They have sent for me to town, and I shall go to-morrow morning. Mr. Charles Fox, with infinite good nature, met Mrs. Damer coming to town, and stopped her to prepare her for the dismal event. It is almost impossible to refrain from bursting out into commonplace reflections on this occasion; but can the walls of Almaack's help moralizing, when 5,000*l.* a year in present and 22,000*l.* in reversion are not sufficient for happiness, and cannot check a pistol!

For the first time in my life I think I do not wish Lord Ossory a son, or Lady Anne greatly married! What a distracted nation! I do not wonder Dr. Battie died worth 100,000*l.* Will anybody be worth a shilling but mad doctors? I could write volumes; but recollect that you are not alone as I am, given up to melancholy ideas, with the rain beating on the skylight, and gusts of wind. On other nights, if I heard a noise, I should think it was some desperate gamester breaking open my house; now, every flap of a door is a pistol. I have often said, this world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those that feel; but when I thought so first, I was more disposed to smile than to feel; and besides, England was not arrived at its present pitch of frenzy. I begin to doubt whether I have not lived in a system of errors. All my ideas are turned topsy-turvy. One must go to some other country and ask whether one has a just notion of anything. To me, everybody round me seems lunatic; yet I think they were sober and wise folks from whom I received all my notions, on money, politics, and what not. Well! I will wait for the echo—I know no better oracle. Good night, Madam. You excuse me in any mood, and therefore I will make no

apology for this incoherent rhapsody. My thoughts, with those I love, always flow according to the cast of the hour. A good deal of sensibility and very shattered nerves expose one to strong impressions. Yet when the sages of this world affect a tenderness they do not know, may not a little real feeling be pardoned? It seems, Mentor Duke of Montagu had made a vow of ever wearing weepers for his vixen turtle, and it required a jury of matrons and divines to persuade him he would not go to the devil and his wife, if he appeared in scarlet and gold on the Prince's birthday; but he is returned to close mourning like Hamlet, and every Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is edified both ways.

1718. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 19, 1776.

I HAVE time but to write you a line, and it is as usual to beg your help in a sort of literary difficulty. I have received a letter dated *Catherine Hall* from *Ken. Prescott*¹, whom I doubt I have forgotten; for he begins, 'Dear Sir,' and I protest I cannot recollect him, though I ought. He says he wants to send me a few classical discourses, and he speaks with respect of my father; and, by his trembling hand, seems an old man. All these are reasons for treating him with great regard, and being afraid of hurting him, I have written a short and very civil answer, directed to the *Rev. Dr. Prescott*. God knows whether he is a clergyman or a doctor—and perhaps I may have betrayed my forgetfulness; but I thought it was best to err on the over-civil side. Tell me something about him: I dread his *Discourses*. Is he the strange man that a few years ago sent me a volume of an uncommon form, and of more uncommon matter? I suspect so.

LETTER 1718.—¹ Master of Catherine Hall, Cambridge.

You shall certainly have two or three of my prints by Mr. Essex when he returns hither and hence, and anything else you will command. I am just now in great concern for the terrible death of General Conway's son-in-law, Mr. Damer, of which, perhaps, you in your solitude have not heard. You are happy who take no part but in the past world, for the *mortui non mordent*, nor do any of the extravagant and distressing things that perhaps they did in their lives. I hope the gout, that persecutes even in a hermitage, has left you.

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

1719. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 20, 1776.

You will have concluded, on the sight of another letter so soon, that you are to hear of a battle in America. Not so, though you are going to hear a dismal story, and, which is worse, relative to friends of mine. Indeed the newspapers will have told it to you already, and you have known the principal actor, Mr. Damer, Lord Milton's eldest son, and who married General Conway's only daughter. I think I told you in my last that he and his two brothers most unexpectedly notified to their father that they owed above seventy thousand pounds. The proud lord, for once in the right, refused to pay the debt, or see them. The two eldest were to retire to France, and Mrs. Damer was to accompany them, without a murmur, and with the approbation, though to the great grief, of Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury. She was, luckily, gone to take her leave of them, and to return to town last Friday morning. On Thursday, Mr. Damer supped at the Bedford Arms in Covent Garden, with four common women, a blind fiddler, and no other man. At three

in the morning he dismissed his seraglio, bidding each receive her guinea at the bar, and ordering Orpheus to come up again in half an hour. When he returned, he found a dead silence, and smelt gunpowder. He called, the master of the house came up, and found Mr. Damer sitting in his chair, dead, with a pistol by him, and another in his pocket! The ball had not gone through his head, nor made any report. On the table lay a scrap of paper with these words, 'The people of the house are not to blame for what has happened, which was my own act.' This was the sole tribute he paid to justice and decency!

What a catastrophe for a man at thirty-two, heir to two-and-twenty thousand a year! We are persuaded lunacy, not distress, was the sole cause of his fate. He has often, and even at supper that night, hinted at such an exploit—the very reason why one should not expect it. His brothers have gamed—he never did. He was grave, cool, reasonable, and reserved; but passed his life as he died, with troops of women and the blind fiddler—an odd companion in such scenes! One good springs out of this evil, the leeches, the Jews and extortioners, will lose very considerably. Lord Milton, whom anything can petrify and nothing soften, will not only not see his remaining sons, but wreaks his fury on Mrs. Damer, though she deserves only pity, and shows no resentment. He insists on selling her jewels, which are magnificent, for discharge of just debts. This is all the hurt he can do her; she must have her jointure of 2,500*l.* a year.

We have no end of these examples of extravagance. There is a Lord Coleraine and his two brothers¹, who have equalled the Damers, and almost the Foxes and Foleys. Their father, who died about two years ago, was apprised of their proceedings, and left all he could, 1,600*l.* a year,

LETTER 1719.—¹ Hon. William and Hon. George Hanger.

to his wife². The unnatural wretches have wheedled her out of all, and Lady Windsor³ has taken her into her house for subsistence! Very lately they told her she must come to town on business:—it was to show her to the Jews, and convince them hers was a good life—unless she is starved. You must not suppose that such actions are disapproved, for the second brother is going minister⁴ to Brussels, that he may not go to jail, whither he ought to go. I am weary of relating such histories. You shall hear no more of them, for my letters would be the annals of Bedlam. Adieu!

22nd.

Since I wrote my letter, an account is come of the total failure of the expedition under General Clinton, Lord Cornwallis, and Sir Peter Parker⁵, against Charleston⁶. The troops landed on Long Island⁷, and then could not act. The fleet attacked a fort, were repulsed, lost a man-of-war, with a captain, lieutenant, and two hundred men, and Sir Peter Parker, they say, is wounded in six places. They were, besides, forced to burn a store-ship. The provincials are confessed to have behaved remarkably well. This success will not discourage the rest. In what a chaos are we embarked!

² Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of Richard Bond, of Cowbery, Herefordshire, and widow of first Baron Coleraine; d. 1780.

³ Alice Clavering, sister and heiress of Sir James Clavering, fourth Baronet, of Axwell, Durham, and widow of second Viscount Windsor; d. Nov. 24, 1776.

⁴ He did not go. *Walpole*.

⁵ Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Knight (1721–1811), created a Baronet in 1782. He had recently been ap-

pointed to command a squadron which was to act on the North American coast.

⁶ The attack was made on June 28, 1776. The state of the tide prevented both troops and ships from acting to advantage against the batteries on Sullivan's Island. Three frigates ran aground, and one was set on fire and abandoned.

⁷ A few miles to the north-east of Sullivan's Island.

1720. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 22, 1776.

I PERCEIVE at last, Madam, that it is very foolish to live out of the world, and a good deal alone; one contracts the strongest prejudices! one fancies one grows old, because one is near threescore; that it is absurd to lay plans for ten or twenty years hence; that one shall not govern the next generation as one did their grandfathers and grandmothers; in short, one imagines one is not immortal. Nay, though there never was an age in which youth thought it so right to anticipate all its prerogatives, and declare its veterans Strulbrugs a little before our time, we silly folks in the country despair of recovering the province of wisdom, that is, keeping young people for ever in leading strings, while we enjoy the world and dispose of all its blessings over our bottle.

The picture of St. George¹ has opened my eyes. I will launch into the world again, and propose to be Prime Minister to King George V, and lay a plan for governing longer than Cardinal Fleury, by surfeiting all the young nobility at Eton and Westminster Schools with sugar-plums. In the meantime if I grow deaf, like the late or present governor², I will have Master George V taught to talk to me upon his fingers, which will teach both him and me to spell, for it would not be proper to have him bawling secrets of state to me through a speaking-trumpet: and when I come to be minister³, I will secure the attachment of all the young senators by getting drunk with them

LETTER 1720.—¹ Reynolds' picture of St. George and the Dragon, with portraits of the fifth Duke of Bedford, his two brothers, and Miss Vernon. It was painted for Richard

Rigby.

² The Earl of Holderness and the Duke of Montagu.

³ An allusion to Earl Gower, President of the Council.

every night till six in the morning; and if I should never be sober enough to give away places, which is the only real business of a minister, I will marry a Scotch wife⁴, who shall think of nothing else. I will do still more, and what no minister yet could ever compass, I will prevent all clamour, by adopting St. George's motto,—*Honi soit qui mal y pense*, which, if inscribed on the picture now in agitation, will certainly hinder anybody's smiling at it. As one cannot entirely divest oneself of one's character,

But find the ruling passion strong in death,

I propose to conclude my career in a manner worthy of an antiquary, as I was in the last century, and when I am satiated with years and honours, and arrived at a comfortable old age, to break my neck out of a cherry-tree in robbing an orchard, like the Countess of Desmond at an hundred and forty; but don't mention this last idea, Madam, lest that roguish lad, the First Lord of the Admiralty⁵, should steal the thought from me.

Thursday evening.

I scribbled the above this morning on receiving your Ladyship's letter, and have since been at the regatta at Richmond, which was the prettiest and foolishlest sight in the world, as all regattas are. The scene, which lay between the Duke of Montagu's and Lady Cowper's, is so beautiful, that, with its shores covered with multitudes, and the river with boats, in the finest of all evenings, nothing could be more delightful. The King and Queen were on a stage on their own terrace: there were but few

⁴ Lord Gower's third wife was Lady Susan Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Galloway. 'After her marriage her life was a series of jobs and solicitations, and she teased

every minister for every little office that fell in his department,' (*Last Journals*, vol. i. p. 233.)

⁵ Lord Sandwich.

barges and streamers, except one of the Duke of Newcastle's, and nobody more in masquerade than they are every day ; but enough of a puppet-show.

The echo is a very discreet personage, and never in a hurry. Ministers are not invulnerable, as you thought. The expedition against Charleston has failed. A man-of-war is lost, with a captain, a lieutenant, and two hundred men, and, as Lord Cranley⁶ told me, Sir Peter Parker himself is wounded in six places. They were forced besides to burn a store-ship ; and what is ten times worse, *the cowardly rebels* behaved remarkably well. It is called a very ill-advised attempt ; though ten days ago what bragging of having got a fifty-gun ship over the bar of Charleston, which had always been thought impossible !

I cannot tell whether I shall go to Houghton, till I know what Mr. Conway determines. The Beauclerks certainly do not go. Mr. Crawford sent me a messenger last Friday to tell me the horrid fate of Mr. Damer, and to say he should not see me unless I was in town on Sunday. As I went on the unhappy occasion, I sent to him—and he was out of town. I should not have gone on purpose, as I know him a little too well.

Adieu ! Madam ; say nothing, and wait for the echo still—to the end of the year. What she says then will be important.

P.S. You may be perfectly easy about Lord Chewton⁷, for the land forces could not act, though they disembarked on Long Island,—a very ingenious exploit !

⁶ George Onslow, created on May 20, 1776, Baron Cranley of Imbercourt, in Surrey.

⁷ George Waldegrave (1751–1789), Viscount Chewton, eldest son of

third Earl Waldegrave, whom he succeeded in 1784. He entered the army in 1768, and was at this time serving with his regiment in America.

1721. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 9, 1776.

MAY I trouble you, dear Sir, when you see our friend Mr. Essex, to tell him that the tower is covered in, and that whenever he has nothing to do, after this week, I shall be very glad to see him here, if he will only send me a line two or three days beforehand. I have carried this little tower higher than the round one, and it has an exceedingly pretty effect, breaking the long line of the house picturesquely, and looking very ancient, thus¹. I wish this, or anything else could tempt you hither.

I must correct a little error in the spelling of a name in the pedigree you was so kind as to make out for me last year; the Derehaughs were not of Colton, but Coulston Hall. This I discovered oddly this morning. On opening a patch-box that belonged to my mother, and which I have not opened for many years, I found an extremely small silver collar or ring, about this size², but broad and flat. I remember it was in an old satin bag of coins that my mother found in old Houghton when she first married. I call it a collar from the breadth; for it would not be large enough for a fairy's lap-dog. It was probably made for an infant's little finger, and must have been for a ring, not a collar, for I believe, though she was an heiress, young ladies did not elope so early in those days. I never knew how it came into the family, but now it is plain, for the inscription on the outside is, *of Coulston Hall, Suff.*, and it is a confirmation of your pedigree. I have tied it to a piece of paper, with a long inscription; and as it is so small, it will not be melted down for the weight; and if not lost from

LETTER 1721.—¹ The original letter contains a drawing of the tower.² Drawing in the original letter.

its diminutive person, may remain in the family a long while, and be preserved when some gamester may spend every other bit of silver he has in the world—at least, if one would make heirlooms now, one must take care that they have no value in them³. I fancy Mrs. Prescott is returned, for I have heard no more of the Doctor⁴.

I wish you may be able to tell me your gout is gone.

Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. I was turning over Edmondson this evening, and observed an odd concurrence of circumstances in the present Lord Carmarthen. By his mother he is the representative of the great Duke of Marlborough, and of Lord Treasurer Godolphin; by his father, of the Lord Treasurer Duke of Leeds; and by his grandmother⁵, is descended from the Lord Treasurer Oxford. Few men are so well ancestored in so short a compass of time.

1722. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1776.

I WAS exceedingly rejoiced the other day to hear by a letter from Lord Strafford that you are alive, which I doubted. I had some thoughts of looking into the *Annual Register* to see if your preferments were given away; but as I find you have only been in a lethargy, and that now I shall not disturb your nap, I venture to put you in mind of a person of whom you have not dreamt these four or

³ The ring described above, together with the inscription in Walpole's handwriting, is now in possession of Earl Waldegrave at Chewton Priory.

⁴ Cole had informed Walpole that Dr. Prescot was mentally deranged, and had written to Horace Walpole

(see letter to Cole of Aug. 19, 1776) during his wife's absence.

⁵ Lady Elizabeth Harley (d. 1713), daughter of first Earl of Oxford; m. (1712) Peregrine Osborne, Marquis of Carmarthen, afterwards third Duke of Leeds.

five months. This has not been my case, though I have given you no more signs of life. I have been going to write to you fifty times, and only waited for that *small peculiar* of a letter, something to say. I hope you have had no other reason for silence. My want is not yet removed, but though a good excuse for a letter's being short, is not above half a reason for not writing at all. Swinny used to tell a story of two old companions, who sitting together one evening till it was quite dark, without speaking, one called to t'other, 'Tom, Tom.' 'Well,' said his friend, 'what do you say?' 'Oh,' said t'other, 'are you there?' 'Ay,' said the friend. 'Why then don't you say *humph*?' said the first. If I had been in Parliament, and could have franked '*humph*,' I really should have written it before now, though General Howe, who, like his family, never wastes a monosyllable, does not think such little amities necessary. Perhaps he reflects that even that symptom of life would not be communicated to the public, who, it seems, have no business to know anything that happens out of their own island. Master Froissart says, 'By the famous wrytyng of auncient auctours all thynges ben knowen in one place or other¹,' which is a great comfort, and the present age seems to be satisfied with what their posterity will know.

I have lately met with a famous auncient auctour, who did not think that everybody ought to know everything. He is a classic, Sir, with whom you ought to be acquainted; his very name is expressive of his vocation and science; he was called *Sir Hugh Plat*², and has written a tractate on gardening, called the *Garden of Eden*, a very proper title, for though he has planted a tree of knowledge, he

LETTER 1722. — ¹ This sentence occurs in the first chapter of Lord Berners' translation.

² Plat was knighted by James I, and died about 1611.

forbids it to be tasted, having concealed his principal secret in a figurative description in imitation of Baptista Porta³ in his *Natural Magic*, so that you might as soon understand a book of Alchemy, as Sir Hugh's treatise, at least his secret. This deep volume is not quite to your purpose, not being an essay on landscape-gardens, but rules to improve fruit and flowers, which being still more the fashionable rage at present than laying out ground, I think you would do well, Mr. Mason, to add a book on that subject. One very great secret Sir Hugh has deigned to disclose; it is a receipt for making a peach-tree bring forth pomegranates: the process is very simple, and consists in nothing but watering (or strictly speaking milking) the peach-tree with goat's milk for three days together.

To be sure you want to know a great deal about me myself, though you forgot you did. My whole history consists in having built a new tower, which is a vast deal higher, but very little larger in diameter than an extinguisher; however, it fully answers the founder's intention, which is to hold Lady Di's drawings. Have you done as much in your way, or any way? I could send you a paltry scurrilous letter against Shakespeare, by Voltaire, but it is not worth sending; if it did, you don't deserve it at my hands, so adieu!

1723. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 20, 1776.

You almost confess by your last that you have a little suspected me of having relaxed my veteran punctuality. I doubt your suspicions will have been augmented, for how can you conceive that at so critical a moment, and with so much reason to expect events, six whole weeks will have

³ Giovanni Battista Porta (d. 1615), a Neapolitan scientific writer.

intervened to-morrow since the letters that brought an account of General Howe being landed on Staten Island in the face of New York? The disgraceful miscarriage of Charleston has come since—but not a syllable from General Howe—not even that his brother has joined him; nor is it known what is become of Lord Howe. The public are impatient, you may be sure: in the ministers it is more than impatience. Yet those no-events are all I could have sent you. The despair from hearing nothing does amount to the importance of an article; and when I have told you that, I have said all I know.

Sir William Hamilton is arrived, and I expect he will call on me here in a day or two. I don't know whether he passed through Florence.

You ask, what is become of the Duchess of Kingston? I have just heard of her, having met Lady Harriet Vernon¹, who is returned from Paris, and saw her there at the Colisée², with a hat and feathers like Henri Quatre. She has given orders for a palace to be taken for her in Paris. At Calais she has a guard at her door, having demanded it, on pretence that her enemies aimed at her life. She obtained it, and has detained it to this moment. Her foolish vanity, you see, will never leave her. I think your Lord Cowper is not much wiser. I should not wonder at his retaining the mob³, if Florence were a borough town. It would be a sort of poetic justice⁴, if he should send his son⁵ to England, and the boy should refuse to return to

LETTER 1723.—¹ Youngest sister of William Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and Lady of the Bed-chamber to Princess Amelia. *Walpole*.

² The French Ranelagh. *Walpole*.

³ To celebrate the birth of his son Lord Cowper caused quantities of bread to be distributed to the poor of two of the parishes of Florence.

⁴ Lord Cowper, from the moment

he went to travel, would not return to England, but settled at Florence, and though entreated in the most earnest manner, would not visit his father before the latter's death. *Walpole*.

⁵ George Augustus Clavering-Cowper (1776-1799), Viscount Fordwich; succeeded his father as fifth Earl Cowper in 1789.

him. I am sorry other climates cannot repair the eccentricities our own climate occasions.

I am inclined to think you will hear good news of Lady Lucy, as she holds out so long. I heartily wish you may.

I shall reserve the rest of my paper, as my letter cannot begin its journey till the 24th, for any news that may happen to arrive in the interim. When I appear remiss, you may be certain I have nothing to tell you. Being so totally idle, it would be unpardonable to be lazy too, when you depend on my correspondence. When it has been so constant above thirty years, it shall not disgrace itself in its old age.

22nd.

The ministers have heard by a ship that met another ship at sea, that Lord Howe has joined his brother, and that they were preparing to make the attempt on New York. This may be so, and is not improbable; but such roundabout intelligence may not be true neither.

I have received another letter from you to-day of the 7th with the enclosed for Mr. Suckling, which will do very well, and certainly satisfy him.

Adieu! till there is something to tell you.

1724. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1776.

I AM much obliged to Lord Ossory, Madam, and certainly do not mean to steal a visit to Ampthill in his absence. I shall not be able to see it this month, for I am waiting for Mr. Essex to finish my new tower, which, as my farmer said, is still older than any of the rest.

Pray don't think I am tired of your stories. Nothing is so pleasant as the occurrences of society in a letter. I am always regretting in my correspondence with Madame du

Deffand and Sir Horace Mann, that I must not make use of them, as the one has never lived in England, and the other not these fifty years, and so any private stories would want notes as much as Petronius. Sir Horace and I have no acquaintance in common but the Kings and Queens of Europe.

I don't know that the Governor was literally writing to Lord Rockingham; but not having succeeded in his last tergiversation, and being a little disappointed too by the fall of my Lord of Chester¹, he has been all this summer a violent anti-courtier, till finding that Lord George² was discontent with the other ministers, and that Lady George wanted a loo party, he and his chameleon have attached themselves there, and swear *by George*, like my Lord Hertford.

It is charming, I own, to have dancing spirits, like the Duchess of Queensberry, in the 16th lustrum; but I don't think if I had, that I should have courage to make use of them. I am strangely afraid of being too young of my age. If everybody was an hundred, and I was only ninety, I would play at marbles, if I liked it, because my seniors would say, 'That poor young creature!' but the sound of 'That old fool!' is too dreadful: and to live upon the memory of what one has been, when nobody remembers it but oneself, is still worse. It is odd, that grey hairs, and dim eyes, and aches should not be sufficient, but that many want a monitor like Saladin's to cry 'Remember you grow old.'

Do you know, Madam, that the ministers firmly believe, from the captain of a ship that met another ship at sea, that Lord Howe has joined his brother, and they were

LETTER 1724.—¹ Markham, Bishop of Chester, recently dismissed from the post of Preceptor to the Prince of Wales.

² Lord George Germain.

preparing to storm New York. The circumstances are no doubt very probable; but should you believe that the silent Howes communicated their intentions to a passenger that was walking by at sea? The General has been profoundly taciturn for six weeks, and I don't think that, in that family, two negative reserves make an affirmative chattering.

Guessing I don't love, because I seldom guess right, but I have something that is called a *presentiment*, that tells me we shall hear of something called a *negotiation*. I could give something like reasons for my opinion, but as I always give up anything rather than dispute, it would be inconvenient to my acquiescent system to furnish myself with arguments, which serve no purpose but to make one obstinate to one's opinion. When one believes without consideration, there is no difficulty in changing sentiments.

Sir William Hamilton called on me yesterday for a moment; he is going to Warwick Castle for a fortnight, and I hope will return charmed with his new niece³.

1725. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Oct. 8, 1776.

I ANSWER your letter incontinently, because I am charmed with your idea of the cenotaph for Gray, and would not have it wait a moment for my approbation. I do not know what my lines¹ were, for I gave them to you, or have burnt or lost them, but I am sure yours are ten times better, as anything must naturally be when you and I write on the same subject. I prefer Westminster Abbey to Stoke, or Pembroke Chapel; not because due to Gray, whose genius does not want any such distinction, but as due to Westminster

³ Sir William Hamilton was uncle of the Earl of Warwick, who had recently married Miss Henrietta Vernon, half-sister of Lord Ossory.

LETTER 1725.—¹ The lines sent by Horace Walpole to Mason shortly after Gray's death. See letter to Mason of Sept. 9, 1771.

Abbey, which would miss him, and to humble the French, who have never had a Homer or a Pindar, nor probably will have, since Voltaire could make nothing more like an epic poem than the *Henriade*, and Boileau and Rousseau have succeeded so little in odes, that the French still think that ballad-wright Quinault² their best lyric poet; which shows how much they understand lyric poetry! Voltaire has lately written a letter against Shakespeare (occasioned by the new paltry translation, which still has discovered his miraculous powers), and it is as downright Billingsgate as an apple-woman would utter if you overturned her wheelbarrow. Poor old wretch! how envy disgraces the brightest talents! How Gray adored Shakespeare! Partridge³, the almanac-maker, perhaps, was jealous of Sir Isaac Newton. Dr. Goldsmith told me he himself envied Shakespeare, but Goldsmith was an idiot, with once or twice a fit of parts. It hurts one when a real genius like Voltaire can feel more spite than admiration, though I am persuaded that his rancour is grounded on his conscious inferiority. I wish you would lash this old scorpion a little, and teach him awe of English poets.

I can tell you nothing more than you see in the common newspapers. Impatience is open-mouthed and open-eared for accounts from New York, on which the attack was to be made on the 26th of August. Success there is more necessary to keep up credit than likely to do more. Should it fail, there is an end of America for England; and if it succeeds, it is at most ground for another campaign. But we choose not to see till we feel, though they who have done the mischief do not disguise their apprehensions. The colonies have an agent⁴ openly at Versailles, and their ships are as openly received into their ports. But I had rather

² Philippe Quinault (1635-1688).

³ John Partridge (1644-1715).

⁴ Silas Deane, of Connecticut.

talk of *Caractacus*⁵; I agree that he will not suffer by not being sputtered by Barry, who has lost all his teeth. Covent Garden is rather above Drury Lane in actors, though both sets are exceedingly bad, so bad—that I almost wish *Caractacus* was not to appear. Very seldom do I go to the play, for there is no bearing such strollers. I saw *Lear* the last time Garrick played it, and as I told him I was more shocked at the rest of the company than pleased with him—which I believe was not just what he desired; but to give a greater brilliancy to his own setting, he had selected the very worst performers of his troop; just as Voltaire would wish there were no better poets than Thomson and Akenside. However, as *Caractacus* has already been read, I do not doubt but it will succeed. It would be a horrible injury to let him be first announced by such unhallowed mouths. In truth, the present taste is in general so vile, that I don't know whether it is not necessary to blunt real merit before it can be applauded.

I have not time to say more: I can say nothing about law, but that I always avoid it if I can; that and everything else wants reformation, and I believe we shall have it from that only reformer, Adversity. I wish I were with you and the good *Palsgrave*, and I always wish you was with me. Adieu!

Yours ever,
H. W.

1726. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1776.

SOMEBODY, I know not whom, taking me for your Ladyship's postman instead of your gazetteer, I confess, without

⁵ Mason's play of that name, produced at Covent Garden Theatre on Dec. 1, 1776.

degrading me, has sent me the enclosed letter for you. As the postmark is Genève, I should have supposed it came from Monsieur Hubert; but as he can never have heard of me but from your Ladyship, he cannot be such an oaf as to think a letter would find me sooner than you, and, besides, he must know your direction. In short, it is like Anthony Henley's¹ direction to the Duke of Somerset over against the trunk-shop at Charing Cross, except that in the present case the trunk-shop is very angry at the impertinence to the Duke of Somerset.

I am quite alone and wishing myself at Ampthill. I did not think Mr. Essex could have come *mal-à-propos*, but it is so difficult to get him, and he has built me a tower, so exactly of the fourteenth century, that I did not dare to put him off, lest it should not be ready for furnishing next spring. It is one of those tall thin Flemish towers, that are crowned with a roof like an extinguisher, and puts one in mind of that at Thornbury, called *Buckingham's Plotting Closet*. I hope no Cardinal Wolsey will sit on my skirts for the likeness.

I have lately been lent two delicious large volumes of Queen Elizabeth's jewels, plate, and the New Year's gifts to her: every page of one of them is signed by Lord Burleigh. She had more gold and silver plate than Montezuma, and even of her father's plunder of cathedrals and convents, particularly rich mitres set with jewels, and I don't doubt but she sometimes wore them as head of the Church, and fancied herself like Pope Joan. I have extracted some of the articles that are most curious, and here they are.

A looking-glass with the *steel* of agate. (This shows they had no quicksilvered glass, and she must have looked delightfully fierce in a piece of polished steel.) But this was of agate; and the glass was of beryl, and had her mother,

LETTER 1726.—¹ Antony Henley (d. 1711), wit and politician.

Anne Boleyn's arms. What a treasure this would be at Strawberry!

A porringer of white purselyn (porcelain) garnished with gold, and a lion at top. (The first porcelain I have read of was in Queen Mary's reign.)

One case of leather painted and gilt with the Duke of Northumberland's (Dudley's) arms, having therein one broad knife, one lesser, two forks, and seven small knives, the hafts of all being silver, enamelled with his arms and word (motto).

One standish of mother-of-pearl, garnished with silver gilt, with three boxes for ink, dust (sand), and counters of silver gilt. These were, I suppose, to calculate with, as I think they still do in the Exchequer.

A gilt font with a cover, having at top a gilt cross chased with antique faces; also the hand (handle) and foot, and with roses and pomegranates (for Henry the Eighth and Catherine of Arragon; this should be at Ampthill, against Lord Gowran's christening) upon the brim, and thereon written, *Maria Regina, Veritas Temporis filia*².

A ship for frankincense of mother-of-pearl, the foot, garnishment, and cover of silver gilt, having the griffon holding the pillar, and Cardinal Wolsey's arms, and a little spoon of silver gilt in it. You see, Madam, by this, and the Duke of Northumberland's knives, that it was charming to be a king or queen in those days, and that all was fish that came to the crown's net. In short, I am exceedingly angry at Messrs. Hampden and Pym, that were the cause of all these pretty baubles being melted down.

One standing cup of Flanders making, garnished with

² This font was probably the property of Queen Mary, who used the rose and pomegranate badge of her mother, Catherine of Aragon, and the motto *Veritas temporis filia*; the

last in allusion to a passage in the preamble of the Act asserting her legitimacy. (See *Annals of England*, vol. ii. p. 225.)

pearls, enamelled in divers places, containing in the foot thereof seven trenchers of silver parcel gilt standing upon the sides (I cannot make out the ichnography of this brave cup), seven forks set with three pearls apiece; at the end seven knives in a case of the like work, and one pair of snippers (snuffers), the hafts of the knives of wood, and the ends silver gilt, with a pearl at the end of each; and in the top four goblets gilt, and three cups of assay (for the taster) gilt, twelve spoons gilt, and the salts garnished with false pearls, and prettily enamelled; and a candlestick having two sockets joined together; and in the top a clock.

One bed-pan, having the Queen's arms enamelled at the end. Here was luxury, and magnificence and taste! I have a great mind to print these dear MSS., and another of Anne of Denmark's furniture at Somerset House, which was lent to me lately too. This majesty's joy was in canopies: she had more than there are chairs now in St. James's; and now and then she gave a bed to her lady of the sweet coffers. She had sweet bags enough to hold all the perfumes of Arabia, and a suit of arras with the history of Charles Brandon³, and embroidered carpets to lay over cupboards, and fine caparisons of purple velvet, richly embroidered all over with silver, made for his Highness's horse to tilt with in Spain at the time of his being there, which his Queen Henrietta Maria, being a good housewife, ordered to be converted into a bed, as she ordered another bed to be *translated*, says the inventory, into the French fashion. Queen Anne had, besides, a cradle-mantle of crimson velvet with a broad gold lace bordered with ermines, and lined with carnation taffety; and pillows laced with gold and silver; but, alas! she had only six pair of fine Holland sheets, and thirty pair of ordinary Holland. There remained also three folio pages full of the robes of Henry VIII, and a diaper table-cloth,

³ Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk.

whose borders were of gold needlework, and one dozen of napkins suitable; and a smock, very richly wrought with gold, silver, and silk. Pray, Madam, do you think this was her Majesty's wedding shift? I will mention nothing more, but a cabinet of ebony, inlaid with silver, *white* ebony (probably ivory) and gilt with flowers and beasts; and in the drawers a comb-case furnished, two gilt cups in the shape of turkeys (as I have three castors like owls), a dresser for the tongue (I suppose a scraper), and sundry pencils and knitting-needles: and another cabinet of cloth of silver, lined with orange-tawny velvet (probably a casket).

Well! considering this solid magnificence, must not all good Christians pray, that when his Majesty has some time or other conquered America, he will extend his arms to Peru and Mexico, that the crown may eat off gold trenchers set with pearls, and that the Queen may have smocks as rough with embroidery as hands can make them, and everything for the bed suitable? So prays her and your Ladyship's poor beadsman.

1727. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1776.

I NEED not tell you what a splendid *Gazette* has already told¹. As I was here before the account arrived, and heard it but imperfectly, I could not write so soon as the first post would set out with the news. The provincials have certainly not behaved up to the haughtiness with which they rejected all overtures of peace. It is said they were outwitted, deceived by feints, and drawn into ambuscade. *That* does no honour to their generals. Great consequences are expected from this victory. I am too ignorant of war, sieges, and America,

LETTER 1727. —¹ General Howe Aug. 27, 1776, in the battle of Brooklyn or Long Island. had defeated the Americans on

to pretend to judge; and really have heard so much from both sides that has not proved true, and at the same time such pains are taken to keep people in the dark, that I have laid it down to myself to believe nothing but what is universally allowed. It is your duty to credit gazettes, and you cannot err while you stick to your Bible. The red ribbon is to be sent to General Howe, who seems to have acted very sensibly.

I have received your letter of the 18th, and think you are very prudent in not accepting the proposal of ceding your estate. I have an exceedingly good opinion of your nephew, but he has been indiscreet, may be so again, and surely the tone of the age does not tempt one to trust to the sensibility of young people. How at your distance could you sue, if the annuity was in arrear? And pray how do you know that the lawyer who has suggested this scheme is an honest man? The profession is excellent at evading laws and settlements; I never heard they were so subtle at procuring redress. Do not say I gave you this advice—I have no reason to disoblige your nephew, but as *your* friend I must approve your resolution of not consenting to the project.

I never saw your Duke with the barbarous name—Ostrogothia²; nor am longer curious of sights. For the first summer of my life, I have stayed quietly at home; at least not been thirty miles. It has struck fifty-nine with me: which is an hour for thinking of ‘the great journey,’ though not for talking of it; in which there always seems a great deal of affectation or unwillingness. Nay, it is silly, too; for how few can one talk to about one’s death, that care about it? if they do, it is unkind. My being is so *isolé* and insignificant, that I shall go out, like a lamp in an illumination, that cannot be missed.

If the person by whom I sent you a letter lately should

² Brother of the King of Sweden. *Walpole*.

return through Florence, I wish you would give him the packet that was to have come by your nephew—if not, by any safe hand—I have had none a great while. As Lady Lucy still lives, I should rather hope well from the journey, and heartily wish she may recover.

1728. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 13, 1776.

JUST after I had sent away my last packet with Monsieur Hubert's letter, I heard of General Howe's success, but concluding your Ladyship would hear it from London, I did not write another letter, besides that I knew no particulars. I am not quite of Mr. Fitzpatrick's opinion that the event is of no consequence to the ministers. I believe a small check would have made them doubt a little whether they should meet the Parliament,—at least for this last month I never saw people more desponding; and this victory has certainly raised their spirits in proportion; at least it has in all I have seen, and I have not seen a soul but courtiers since the news came. Indeed I have not been out of my own house, for on Tuesday last as I came out of town my foot slipped as I got into my chaise, and I hit my knee, which brought the gout thither, and though it is almost gone, it kept me from dining at Lady Blandford's to-day, and has hindered me from scrambling into my new tower with Mr. Essex, which was a vexation; but as I am got into that very grave year, my sixtieth, it is not becoming to be moved at anything; and so, as philosophy is always the thing one has when one wants it, I pretended to be very indifferent about going into the tower, and only scolded my footman for something that would not have made me peevish at any other time, which I think proves I am a true philosopher.

If you do not understand Monsieur Hubert's letter,

Madam, how is it possible I should? You seem to have described me to him as an agreeable mixture of the continent Scipio and a member of the Hell-fire Club; nay, and to have bestowed two as uncommon ladies on me who were content without being in love with, and yet could pass a whole night in hearing very indelicate conversation. Dames more extraordinary certainly than Scipio himself! I am unfortunately of an age not to attempt to clear myself of the character of the chaste Roman, but I beg you will undeceive Monsieur Hubert about my licentious conversation, which I hope is not one of my faults. When you are in train of defending me, Madam, I beg you will also undeceive him about the shining merits he supposes in me. I hate to have anybody think better of me than I deserve; and I must say your Ladyship's partiality to me, at least your favour, is apt to rate me above the common run of men, which I know I am not.

I never had anything like a solid understanding on one side, or wit on the other. As a proof that I know my own level, you have always heard me speak with enthusiasm of Charles Townshend, George Selwyn, Charles Fox, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Gray, Mr. Gibbon, and of everybody of singular capacity or parts, which is seldom the case but of those who are conscious of having no pretensions; but this is growing too grave apropos to Mr. Hubert's wild letter. If I had wit, I should have laughed at it with some wit.

I am exceedingly inclined to come to Ampthill about the 24th. I have no exceptions to the party before as individuals, but as too numerous; besides I promised to go again to Park Place, and if I can walk tolerably by that time, think of going thither about the 18th or 19th for a couple of days, but I will neither embarrass them nor you with my gout, and will be sure it is gone before I frisk anywhere.

Oct. 15.

I received your postscript, and add one to mine. About the American news, I say what I always have thought and said, that whatever way this war ends, it will be fatal to this country. The liberty of America made it flourish to the prodigious height it did. If governed by an army, instead of inviting settlers and trade, it will be deserted and be a burthen to us, as Peru and Mexico, with all their mines, have been to Spain. The war has already drained us of men; if the army could be brought back, how many, between climate and other chances, will return? Our ships are entering on their third winter in those seas, and we have flung away in those three years what should have lessened our debt, and prepared against a war with France. The plea for the last Peace was our inability of proceeding with the war. Are we in the condition we were in 1763? How soon we shall have a French war, I know not; it is much talked of already at Paris; but come when it will, then will be the moment of judging of this war with the colonies. I believe France will then recover Canada, with interest; and for the East Indies, with our fleets, supported by our trade, obtained, I have always looked on them as a vision, which made us drunk with riches, which will be a burthen to maintain, and which will vanish like a scene in the Arabian Tales. I have not less gloomy ideas of your Ireland, where, I conclude, the first storm will burst. I could carry my prophecy much further; but the present exultation speaks it all—nor does it surprise me. It is natural, I doubt, for the human heart to pass from dependency to intoxication; nor can one wonder. I believe it is the truest philosophy to think only of the present moment. Chance is a more potent sovereign than foresight, which has no ways and means but probability to work

with. I honour Chance, and beg her to contradict all my prophecies.

I heard the story of the Prince of Conti¹ here, never from France: indeed, I heard two stories, one of the late Prince, another of the present, and know not which your Ladyship means. Neither sounded to me in the least probable. I still less know who the lady is, that is only indulged in feeding her horse with cherries—a luxury she cannot enjoy above one month in the twelve. As this is October, when I hear it, it puts me in mind of the late Duke of Cleveland, who though past twenty when his father was dying in December, was overjoyed, and said, ‘Now my mother must stay in my father’s room, she cannot watch *me*, and I will go into the garden and get birds’-nests.’

Mr. Conway has certainly marks of his disorder still, though not considerable. I hope to find him still more mended than he was.

1729. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Thursday, 31.

THANK you for your letter. I send this by the coach. You will have found a new scene¹—not an unexpected one by you and me, though I do not pretend I thought it so near. I rather imagined France would have instigated or winked at Spain’s beginning with us. Here is a solution of the Americans declaring themselves independent². Oh! the folly, the madness, the guilt of having plunged us into this abyss! Were we and a few more endued with any uncommon penetration?—No: they who did not see as far

LETTER 1728.—¹ Louis François Joseph de Bourbon, known during the lifetime of his father (whom he had recently succeeded) as the Comte de la Marche.

LETTER 1729.—¹ On the opening

of the Parliament in the year 1776. *Walpole*.

² Probably an allusion to the willingness of France to help the Americans.

would not. I am impatient to hear the complexion of to-day. I suppose it will, on the part of administration, have been a wretched farce of fear, daubed over with airs of bullying. You, I do not doubt, have acted like yourself, feeling for our situation, above insulting, and unprovoked but at the criminality that has brought us to this pass. Pursue your own path, nor lean to the court that may be paid to you on either side, as I am sure you will not regard their being displeased that you do not go as far as their interested views may wish.

If the court should receive any more of what they call good news, I think the war with France will be unavoidable. It was the victory at Long Island, and the frantic presumption it occasioned, that has ripened France's measures; and now we are to awe them by pressing; an act that speaks our impotence!—which France did not want to learn!

I would have come to town, but I had declared so much I would not, that I thought it would look as if I came to enjoy the distress of the ministers; but I do not enjoy the distress of my country. I think we are undone—I have always thought so; whether we enslaved America, or lost it totally: so we that were against the war could expect no good issue. If you do return to Park Place to-morrow, you will oblige me much by breakfasting here: you know it wastes you very little time.

I am glad I did not know of Mrs. Damer's sore throat till it is almost well. Pray take care and do not catch it.

Thank you for your care of me: I will not stay a great deal here, but at present I never was better in my life; and here I have no vexatious moments. I hate to dispute; I scorn to triumph myself, and it is very difficult to keep my temper when others do. I own I have another reason

for my retirement, which is prudence. I have thought of it late, but, at least, I will not run into any new expense. It would cost me more than I care to afford to buy a house in town, unless I do it to take some of my money out of the stocks, for which I tremble a little. My brother is seventy; and if I live myself, I must not build too much on his life; and you know, if he fails, I lose the most secure part of my income. I refused from Lord Holland, and last year from Lord North, to accept the place for my own life; and having never done a dirty thing, I will not disgrace myself at fifty-nine. I should like to live as well as I have done; but what I wish more, is to secure what I have already saved for those I would take care of after me. These are the true reasons of my dropping all thought of a better house in town, and of living so privately here. I will not sacrifice my health to my prudence; but my temper is so violent, that I know the tranquillity I enjoy here in solitude is of much more benefit to my health, than the air of the country is detrimental to it. You see I can be reasonable when I have time to reflect; but philosophy has a poor chance with me when my warmth is stirred; and yet I know that an angry old man out of Parliament, and that can do nothing but be angry, is a ridiculous animal.

1730. *TO SIR HORACE MANN.*

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 1, 1776.

FOR three weeks you have been expecting accounts from New York: so have we; and so we are still. Nothing was come this morning; but we seem to be at the eve of another interlude, that will be full as serious as the chief piece. Very few days before the Parliament was to meet, nine or ten ships of the line were put into commission; and, on Tuesday, press-warrants were issued, and every

appearance spoke war. The first reports were that Spain was going to attack Portugal; and so it looks still: and, they say, by the obstinacy of the latter.

I do not know how, but the general opinion is, that, though Monsieur de Noailles¹ is just arrived, our preparations are made at least as much against France, as to support Portugal. Every port in France countenances these apprehensions; and our late success at Long Island does but make it probable that we shall not be suffered quietly to fetch over too many victories. The agent² of the colonies is openly countenanced at Versailles; and it is past a doubt that they are assisted and traded with. I hear this was urged yesterday, in both Houses, by the opposition; and not denied. The King's Speech you will see; and I think it gainsays but very faintly all I tell you. The opposition made a sort of protest against all the late measures, in a kind of address, that they would have substituted for that prepared by the court: not expecting, to be sure, to carry it, but as their declaration. As I am here, I could not learn even these particulars in time to write to you by to-night's post. Indeed, what shall pass at present in Parliament will decide nothing. Parliament has done what, I think, it will never be able to undo; and it must excuse me if I do not honour its wisdom.

What a strange event in France! Monsieur Necker³, a Protestant, and actually resident from Geneva, made one of the Comptrollers of the Finances! What says your neighbour, Madame of Babylon⁴? but, poor old soul, she dares say nothing. Marshal Turenne's ghost will die for shame, that, with all his glory, he turned Catholic to make his court. A little Swiss banker will be above such mean-

LETTER 1730.—¹ The new Ambassador from France. *Walpole*.

² Silas Deane.

³ Jacques Necker (1732-1804).

⁴ Rome. *Walpole*.

ness. No, I never disapproved your decrowning Count Albany⁵: it became you: but I certainly have the utmost contempt for the court of Rome, that denied him a title, of which his family had forfeited all the advantages for *their* cause. I am glad they did; for it shows how insignificant both he and they are. You never did mention the *démêlé*⁶ with Lord Cowper; and I could easily excuse it.

There seems to me little danger in Lady O.'s eruption. She has for many years had frequent red faces, and therefore I suppose they do her good.

I still think Lady Lucy⁷ has a good chance of living, by holding out so long. Thank you much for your kindness to Mr. Giles⁸. I shall go to town on Sunday for a day or two, and if I hear any further news you shall know.

Arlington Street, Nov. 4.

At last the confirmation is come of New York being in possession of General Howe⁹, having been abandoned by the provincials. Three thousand men sallied out of their lines, but were repulsed by three regiments, with little loss of life on either side, but thirteen or fourteen of the King's officers were wounded. Three days after Howe was in the town it was fired by some provincials, and a quarter of it burnt before the flames could be extinguished. Howe is now encamped within four miles of the enemy's lines. I don't know whether he means to attempt to force them, or whether they mean to make their stand now, or draw him up into the country. My opinion is, that if he gains any

⁵ The Pretender. Sir Horace Mann had remonstrated against his being received at Rome as King of England; and the Pope complied. *Walpole*.

⁶ The Count of Albany and Lord Cowper quarrelled and went to law over a house which each of them

wished to take.

⁷ Lady Lucy Mann.

⁸ A neighbour of Mr. Walpole at Twickenham, by whom he had written to Sir Horace. *Walpole*.

⁹ General Howe took possession of New York on Sept. 15, 1776.

great advantage, it will but the sooner bring on a war with France, as it is natural to suppose they will not let us ever be quiet masters of America again, nor miss the present favourable opportunity of embarrassing us so considerably. However, I have no great faith in reasonings on future events, and much less on my own reasonings of that sort. When it is so difficult to trace back events to causes, the reverse must be much more fallible.

1731. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 2, 1776.

THOUGH inclination, and consciousness that a man of my age, who is neither in Parliament nor in business, has little to do in the world, keep me a good deal out of it, yet I will not, my dear Lord, encourage you in retirement; to which, for the interest of your friends, you have but too much propensity. The manners of the age cannot be agreeable to those who have lived in something soberer times; nor do I think, except in France, where old people are never out of fashion, that it is reasonable to tire those whose youth and spirits may excuse some dissipation. Above all things, it is my resolution never to profess retirement, lest, when I have lost all my real teeth, the imaginary one, called a colt's, should hurry me back and make me ridiculous. But one never outlives all one's cotemporaries; one may assort with them. Few Englishmen, too, I have observed, can bear solitude without being hurt by it. Our climate makes us capricious, and we must rub off our roughness and humours against one another. We have, too, an always increasing resource, which is, that though we go not to the young, they must come to us: younger usurpers tread on their heels, as they did on ours, and revenge us that have

been deposed. They may retain their titles, like Queen Christina, Sir M — N —, and Lord Rivers; but they find they have no subjects. If we could but live long enough, we should hear Lord Carlisle, Mr. Storer, &c., complain of the airs and abominable hours of the youth of the age. You see, my dear Lord, my easy philosophy can divert itself with anything, even with visions; which perhaps is the best way of treating the great vision itself, life. For half one's time one should laugh *with* the world, the other half *at* it—and then it is hard if we want amusement.

I am heartily glad, for your Lordship's and Lady Anne Conolly's sakes, that General Howe¹ is safe. I sincerely interest myself for everybody you are concerned for. I will say no more on a subject on which I fear I am so unlucky as to differ very much with your Lordship, having always fundamentally disapproved our conduct with America. Indeed, the present prospect of war with France, when we have so much disabled ourselves, and are exposed in so many quarters, is a topic for general lamentation, rather than for canvassing of opinions, which every man must form for himself: and I doubt the moment is advancing when we shall be forced to think alike, at least on the present.

I have not yet above a night at a time in town—but shall be glad to give your Lordship and Lady Strafford a meeting there whenever you please.

Your faithful humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER 1731.—¹ General Howe's wife was a daughter of Lady Anne Conolly, and a niece of Lord Strafford.

1732. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

LETTRE DE VOLTAIRE À M. D'ARGENTAL¹.

MON CHER AMI,

Fernet, 19 Juillet, 1776.

J'apprends que Monsieur de St. Julien arrive dans mon désert avec le Kain. Si la chose est vraie, j'en suis tout étonné et tout joyeux ; mais il faut que je vous dise combien je suis fâché pour l'honneur du tripot contre un nommé Tourneur², qu'on dit Secrétaire de la Librairie, et qui ne me paroît pas le Secrétaire du bon goût. Auriez-vous lù deux volumes misérables dans lesquels il veut faire regarder Shakespeare comme le seul modèle de la véritable tragédie ? Il l'appelle le Dieu du Théâtre ; il sacrifie tous les François sans exception à son idole, comme on sacrifioit des cochons à Cérès. Il ne daigne pas nommer Corneille ou Racine : ces deux grands hommes sont seulement enveloppés dans la proscription générale sans que leurs noms soient prononcés. Il y a déjà deux tomes d'imprimés de ce Shakespeare, qu'on prendrait pour des pièces de la foire, faites il y a deux cents ans ; ce maraud a trouvé le secret de faire engager le Roi et la Reine et toute la famille royale à souscrire à son ouvrage. Avez-vous lu son abominable grimoire dont il y aura encore cinq volumes ? Avez-vous une haine assez vigoureuse contre cet impudent imbécile ? Souffrirez-vous l'affront qu'il fait à la France ? Vous et Monsieur de Thibouville³ vous êtes trop doux. Il n'y a pas en France assez

LETTER 1732.—Hitherto printed as part of letter to Mason of Sept. 17, 1776. (See *Notes and Queries*, Aug. 4, 1900.)

¹ Charles Augustin de Ferriol (1700–1788), Comte d'Argental, Minister of Parma at the court of France, and Councillor in the Parliament of Paris. He was an intimate friend of Voltaire, and a younger brother of Madame du Deffand's friend,

Pont-de-Veyle. A copy of this letter was enclosed by Madame du Deffand in her letter to Horace Walpole of Aug. 4, 1776.

² Pierre le Tourneur (1736–1788), translator of many English works into French.

³ Henri Lambert d'Erbigny (d. 1784), Marquis de Thibouville, soldier and *littérateur*. He was on friendly terms with Voltaire.

de camouflets, assez de bonnets d'ânes, assez de pillorie contre un pareil faquin ? Le sang pétille dans mes vieilles veines en parlant de lui. S'il ne vous a pas mis en colère, je vous tiens pour un homme impassible. Ce qu'il y a d'affreux c'est que le monstre a un parti en France, et pour comble de calamités, et d'horreur, c'est moi qui autrefois parlai le premier de ce Shakespeare ; c'est moi qui le premier montrai aux François quelques perles que j'avois trouvées dans son énorme fumier. Je ne m'attendais pas que je servirois à fouler aux pieds les couronnes de Racine et de Corneille, pour en orner le front d'un histrion barbare.

Tâchez, je vous prie, d'être aussi en colère que moi, sans quoi je me sens capable de faire un mauvais coup. Quant à mon ami M. le cocher Gilbert⁴, je souhaite qu'il aille au carcan à bride abattue, etc., etc.

I have a mind to provoke you, and so I send you this silly torrent of ribaldry. May the spirit of Pope that dictated your *Musæus*, animate you to punish this worst of dunces, a genius turned fool with envy ! I have a mind to be a dunce too and alter one line of your epitaph, the last. I think *She heard* should not be repeated twice ; *heard* is an inharmonious word, and the elision between *she* and *heard* adds to the cacophony. I would read,—

She heard thy Homer in her Milton's strains,
And Pindar's music from the lyre of Gray.—

Or 'thy.' It is very impertinent in me, who have no ear and am no poet, to correct you, who are a musician, and a poet if ever there was one ; but then, I will submit if you do not approve my emendation.

⁴ Probably Nicolas Joseph Laurent Gilbert (1751-1780), poet.

Having nothing new to read, I have been tumbling over my old books, and there I found what I had never read nor heard mentioned, and which I think has a vast deal more of wit than the ancients used in their writings. Mind, I say used, for no doubt all times and all countries have produced men of wit, and I know Julius Cæsar had a collection of Cicero's *bons mots*. Diogenes Laertius too has recorded those of the philosophers, very few of which I allow to have any wit in them. The piece I mean is Seneca's *De Morte Claudii Caesaris*. There is a good deal of Greek in it, and I have forgotten my Greek, and some of my Latin too, and do not understand many passages in this satire; but let me give you an instance of great wit; speaking of his death and the astrologers, who had not foretold it rightly, he says, *horam ejus nemo novit, nemo enim illum unquam natum putavit*.

Last night I took up Pope's Letters to Mr. Digby⁵, and finding Lady Suffolk's name, I regretted having never questioned her about the latter. This is a sort of pleasure I lose every day. I came into the world long enough ago to have informed myself from elder persons of many things I should now like to know; and there is much more satisfaction in inquiring into old stories than in telling them. Formerly I was so foolish, like most young people, as to despise them. I don't mean by this to invite the young to apply to me; I am not over-fond of their company. Recollection is more agreeable than observation at the end of life. Will Dr. Johnson, and I know not most of the rest by name, interest the next age like Addison, Prior, Pope, and Congreve? will General Gage or Sir Peter Parker succeed to the renown of the Duke of Marlborough, even

⁵ Hon. Robert Digby (d. 1726), second son of fifth Baron Digby. Pope wrote his epitaph and that of

his sister in the lines beginning, 'Go, fair example of untainted youth.'

had the last had no more merit than Macpherson will allow him? Oh, there is another of our authors, Macpherson! when one's pen can sink to him, it is time to seal one's letter.

1733. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Nov. 13, 1776.

As next to sense and wit, I love nonsense; and as it is very convenient to love the last, especially if it will produce the second, I shall certainly indulge myself, since my quotation from a certain potion (which I do not think the most rational performance in the world) from a certain book gave occasion to your Ladyship to make an application of as much wit as ever I heard in my life; and yet so obvious an one that it is amazing it never struck anybody before. My Lord J. may comfort himself, for though he is very blind, you have discovered that if he had five more eyes, and all seven were as good as Argus's, they might prove no preservative. I sent you, on Monday, another piece of nonsense, and expect great returns from it, though you never can exceed your last quotation. You guessed very right too about Strawberry.

I have called this morning on Lady Warwick, but they are gone out of town again. News I found none, but that Mr. North¹ is to marry Miss Egerton, with 100,000*l.* to begin the world with.

Yesterday, just after I arrived, I heard drums and trumpets in Piccadilly: I looked out of the window and saw a procession with streamers flying. At first I thought it a pressgang, but seeing the corps so well drest, like Hussars, in yellow with blue waistcoats and breeches, and high caps, I concluded it was some new body of our allies,

LETTER 1733.—¹ No son of Lord North married a Miss Egerton.

or a regiment newly raised, and with new regimentals for distinction. I was not totally mistaken, for the colonel is *a new ally*. In short, this was a procession set forth by Mr. Bate², Lord Lyttelton's chaplain, and author of the old *Morning Post*, and meant as an appeal to the town against his antagonist, the new one. I did not perceive it, but the musicians had masks; on their caps was written *The Morning Post*, and they distributed hand-bills. I am sure there were at least between thirty and forty, and this mummerly must have cost a great deal of money. Are not we quite distracted, reprobate, absurd, beyond all people that ever lived? The new *Morning Post* I am told, for I never take in either, exceeds all the outrageous Billingsgate that ever was heard of. What a country! Does it signify what happens to it? Is there any sense, integrity, decency, taste, left? Are not we the most despicable nation upon earth, in every light? A solemn and expensive masquerade exhibited by a clergyman, in defence of daily scandal against women of the first rank, in the midst of a civil war! and while the labouring poor are torn from their families by pressgangs! and a foreign war is hanging over our heads! And everybody was diverted with this! —Do you think, Madam, that anything can save such a sottish and stupid nation? Does it deserve to be saved? you that have children will wish for miracles; as I have none but what Mary provides, I can almost wish we may be scourged. I pity the unborn, who were in the entail of happiness, but what can be said for those in present possession?

P.S. I return to-morrow to Strawberry.

² Rev. Henry Bate (1745–1824), editor of the *Morning Post*. He took

the name of Dudley in 1784, and was created a Baronet in 1813.

1734. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 24, 1776.

MR. GILES has delivered me the packet of letters, for which I thank you ; but I have been so backwards and forwards between this place and London, that I have missed seeing him himself. I am rejoiced to hear there are hopes of Lady Lucy.

I cannot tell you the particulars, as I am here, and have not yet learnt them ; but there is another victory¹, a naval one, over the provincials on the Lake Champlain. They have lost their whole fleet, have burnt Crown Point, and are retired to Ticonderoga, where, I think, they are besieged. You will see the particular circumstances in the papers, as soon as I could hear and tell them. General Howe, it is said, finding the lines at King's Bridge too strong, is drawing others between them and New York. Some say he is meditating or executing a diversion ; at the same time there is a pretty general opinion that he is negotiating a peace.

You, perhaps, are still more inquisitive about the appearance of war in Europe. If I was an ambassador myself, I could not answer you more unsatisfactorily, which, if I spoke in a character, would be called mysteriously or enigmatically ; but my reason is founded, as perhaps it is sometimes in your profession, on ignorance. The outward and visible signs are all martial. Equipment of a fleet, pressing of sailors, and the nomination of an admiral : so much for Bellona. On the other hand, France says she has no thoughts of war, and our ministers declare they believe her. For her amusement, indeed, she makes great naval

preparations, and some say, does not frown on the Americans, nor on their Resident, Silas Deane. *Nous verrons.*

If you should ask what the opposition says,—I answer, nothing. They have abandoned Parliament, and some are gone into the country, and some to Paris: not to confer with Mr. Deane, but to see horse-races,—of which we have none here!

After so much negative information, I can tell you one event: Lord Buckingham² is made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Being a little unfortunate generally in my prophecies and conjectures, I choose to foretell that he will be the most humble, sweet-tempered, generous, and profound governor that ever that island was blessed with yet.

I forgot to say, that it is not Lord Bristol who commands the fleet, but Admiral Keppel. He is in the opposition, but they being at leisure, he was appointed.

I certainly did mean to name Lord Thomas Clinton to you, as I was desired, though I knew it was unnecessary. Thank you much for saying I did; I don't know how I came to forget it.

Arlington Street, Nov. 26.

You will see the particulars of the naval victory in the *Gazette*. It is not much valued here, as it is thought Carleton must return to Quebec for the winter. The idea of negotiation gains ground—that of war declines, for we hear Grimaldi, the Spanish minister, has resigned, and he was reckoned no friend of ours; but pray, never mind what I say in the future tense, in which I have no skill at all. We know past times very imperfectly, and how should we, when few know even the present, and they who do, have good reasons for not being communicative? I have lived till I think I know nothing at all.

² Hitherto printed 'Rockingham.'

1735. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 1, 1776.

THOUGH I wrote to you but the other day, and have nothing new to tell you, I must say a few words in answer to yours by Mr. Hull, and to that of Nov. 16th which I have just received.

As you are my first consideration, I could but state to you what reason and experience dictated for your personal security. I have, however, no doubt but you will find all honour and justice in your nephew, who I am sure has sense, and as I told you before you saw him, appeared to me to have an excellent heart. It pleased me to see that he answered so thoroughly in your eyes to the character I had given you of him. As he is Gal's son, I must be glad too that you have made his mind at ease about his daughters. Still as I have so much friendship for your whole family, and think so well of Mr. and Mrs. Foote, I am not at all sorry that the step you have taken was transacted without my advice. I could never have brought myself to have decided on a point in which one part or other of your family would think itself wounded, as I doubt may be the case now; though I believe Mr. and Mrs. Foote are too good and reasonable to do more than think. You yourself have been originally ill-used by both your brothers James and Edward. The former was very weak—the other had not very good sense, with an abominable temper—but he is gone and I will say no more.

I did tell you I received the packet from Mr. Gyles, who, I suppose, is the person you mean by Mr. *Price*; you might easily forget the name of a man you knew so little.

I don't know who the Englishwoman is of whom you give so ridiculous a description; but it will suit thousands. I distrust my age continually, and impute to it half the

contempt I feel for my countrymen and women. If I think the other half well founded, it is by considering what must be said hereafter of the present age. What is to impress a great idea of us on posterity? In truth, what do our cotemporaries of all other countries think of us? They stare at and condemn our politics and follies; and if they retain any respect for us, I doubt it is for the sense we have had. I do know, indeed, one man who still worships us, but his adoration is testified so very absurdly, as not to do us much credit. It is a Monsieur de Marchais, first *valet de chambre* to the King of France. He has the *Anglomanie* so strong, that he has not only read more English than French books, but if any valuable work appears in his own language, he waits to peruse it till it is translated into English; and to be sure our translations of French are admirable things!

To do the rest of the French justice, I mean such as like us, they adopt only our egregious follies, and in particular the flower of them, horse-racing! *Le Roi Pepin*, a racer, is the horse in fashion. I suppose the next shameful practice of ours they naturalize will be personal scurrilities in the newspapers, especially on young and handsome women, in which we certainly are originals! Voltaire, who first brought us into fashion in France, is stark mad at his own success. Out of envy to writers of his own nation, he cried up Shakespeare; and now is distracted at the just encomiums bestowed on that first genius of the world in the new translation¹. He sent to the French Academy an invective that bears all the marks of passionate dotage. Mrs. Montagu² happened to be present when it was read. Suard³, one of their writers, said to her, 'Je crois, Madame, que vous êtes un peu fâchée de ce que vous venez d'en-

LETTER 1735. — ¹ Le Tourneur's translations into French.

² Mrs. Robinson Montagu, who wrote the Defence of Shakespeare

against Voltaire. *Walpole*.

³ Jean Baptiste Antoine Suard (1733-1817), member of the French Academy.

tendre.' She replied, 'Moi, Monsieur! point du tout! Je ne suis pas amie de Monsieur Voltaire.' I shall go to town the day after to-morrow, and will add a postscript if I hear any news.

Dec. 3rd.

I am come late, have seen nobody, and must send away my letter.

1736. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 3, 1776.

I SHOULD not have waited for a regular response, Madam, if I had not been precisely in the same predicament with your Ladyship, reduced to write from old books to tell you anything new. I have been three days at Strawberry, and have not seen a creature but Sir John Hawkins's five volumes¹, the two last of which, thumping as they are, I literally did read in two days. They are old books to all intents and purposes, very old books; and what is new, is like old books, too, that is, full of minute facts that delight antiquaries: nay, if there had never been such things as parts and taste, this work would please everybody. The first volume is extremely worth looking *at*, for the curious facsimiles of old music and old instruments, and so is the second. The third is very heavy; the two last will amuse you, I think, exceedingly, at least they do me.

My friend, Sir John, is a matter-of-fact man, and does now and then stoop very low in quest of game. Then he is so exceedingly religious and grave as to abhor mirth, except it is printed in the old black letter, and then he calls the most vulgar ballad pleasant and full of humour. He thinks nothing can be sublime but an anthem, and Handel's choruses heaven upon earth. However he writes with great modera-

LETTER 1736.—¹ Hawkins' *History of Music*.

tion, temper, and good sense, and the book is a very valuable one. I have begged his austerity to relax in one point, for he ranks comedy with farce and pantomime. Now I hold a perfect comedy to be the perfection of human composition, and believe firmly that fifty *Iliads* and *Æneids* could be written sooner than such a character as Falstaff's. Sir John says that Dr. Wallis discovered that they who are not charmed with music want a nerve in their brain. This would be dangerous anatomy. I should swear Sir John wants the comic nerve; and by parity of reason, we should ascribe new nerves to all those who have bad taste, or are delighted with what others think ridiculous. We should have nerves like Romish saints to preside over every folly; and Mr. Cosmo must have a nerve which I hope Dr. Wallis would not find in 50,000 dissections. Rechin, too, had a sort of nerve that is lost like the music of the ancients; yet, perhaps, the royal *touch* could revive it more easily than it cures the evil.

4th.

The quarrel between the SS. Cosmo and Damian², they say, is at an end. I kept back my letter in hopes of something to tell your Ladyship, but there is a universal yawn, and the town as empty as in August. I heard only a good story of Mrs. Boscawen³, the Admiral's widow, who lives near London, and came to town as soon as she had dined at her country hour. She said, 'I expected to find everybody at dinner, but instead of that, I found all the young ladies strolling about the streets, and not thinking of going home to dress for dinner; so I had set out in the evening, and yet got to town in the morning of the same day.'

² Patron saints of the medical profession; probably an allusion to the constant disputes between the brothers—William Hunter the anatomist and John Hunter the surgeon.

³ Frances (d. 1805), daughter of William Evelyn Glanville, of St. Clair, Kent; m. (1744) Hon. Edward (afterwards Admiral) Boscawen.

I shall stay here for Mr. Mason's *Caractacus* that is to be acted on Friday, and then return to my hill.

1737. TO GEORGE ALLAN¹.

SIR,

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1776.

As I have not the satisfaction of being acquainted with you, I must think myself very particularly obliged by your present of the two fine and very like prints of Bishop Trevor², and beg you will be pleased to accept my sincere thanks. If you ever happen to pass this way I shall be extremely glad to show you the collection you have so handsomely adorned, and to have an opportunity in person of assuring you how gratefully I am, Sir,

Your most obliged

and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1738. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1776.

I KNOW you love an episcopal print¹, and, therefore, I send you one of two, that have just been given to me. As you have time and patience, too, I recommend you to peruse Sir John Hawkins's new *History of Music*. It is true, there are five huge volumes in quarto, and perhaps you may not care for the expense, but surely you can borrow them in the University, and, though you may, no more than I, delight in the scientific part, there is so much about cathedral service, and choirs, and other old matters, that I am sure you

LETTER 1737.—Not in C.; reprinted from Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. viii, p. 509.

¹ George Allan (1736-1800), topographer and antiquary. He was by

profession an attorney.

² A former Bishop of Durham.

LETTER 1738.—¹ See the previous letter.

will be amused with a great deal, particularly the two last volumes, and the facsimiles of old music in the first. I doubt it is a work that will not sell rapidly, but it must have a place in all great libraries.

Pray tell Mr. Essex his ceiling is finished, and very well executed.

As we have not had about² two or three cold days, I hope the winter agrees with you, and that your complaints are gone off.

Adieu, dear Sir.

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

1739. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 17, 1776.

IT is not from being made Archbishop of York¹ that I write by a secretary, Madam; but because my right hand has lost its cunning. It has had the gout ever since Friday night, and I am overjoyed with it, for there is no appearance of its going any farther. I came to town on Sunday in a panic, concluding I should be bedrid for three months, but I went out last night, and think I shall be able in a few days to play upon the guitar if I could play upon it at all.

I know very little, but that for want of Parliament General Burgoyne is at this moment making an oration from the rostrum to the citizens of Westminster, in recommendation of Lord Petersham²; and that Doctor Franklin, at seventy-two, is arrived³ in a frigate at Nantes, and has brought in two prizes that he took in his way. He was to be at Paris on Saturday night. He left everything quiet in America on the 30th of October, and I have been just told that letters

² So in original; read 'above.'

LETTER 1739.—¹ Markham, Bishop of Chester, was appointed Archbishop of York on Dec. 16, 1776.

² Charles Stanhope (1753-1829),

Viscount Petersham; eldest son of second Earl of Harrington, whom he succeeded in 1779.

³ As Envoy to the court of France.

are come from Lord Howe of the 13th of November, in which he asks for some more cables, and says he has written by another ship that is not arrived.

I have seen the picture of St. George, and approve the Duke of Bedford's head, and the exact likeness of Miss Vernon, but the attitude is mean and foolish, and expresses silly wonderment. But of all delicious is a picture of a little girl⁴ of the Duke of Buccleuch, who is overlaid with a long cloak, bonnet, and muff, in the midst of the snow, and is perishing blue and red with cold, but looks so smiling, and so good-humoured, that one longs to catch her up in one's arms and kiss her till she is in a sweat and squalls.

My hand has not a word more to say.

1740. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 20, 1776.

I CANNOT write to you myself, my dear Sir, for I have the gout in my right hand and wrist, and feel enough of it about me to fear that it will make its general tour; which by this third year's experience, seems to have grown annual instead of biennial: however, I am still so partial to the bootikins, as to believe that it is they that save me from having near so much pain as other gouty people complain of; and, while I do not suffer much, there is no great hardship in an old man's being confined to his own house. It is not, however, to talk of myself that I send you this; but to tell you that I have received your letter for Lord North, and as I could not carry it myself, I sent it to him by a friend, and do not doubt but so just a request will be attended to.

⁴ Lady Caroline Scott, afterwards Marchioness of Queensberry. She entered the room, dressed as Horace Walpole describes her, while Sir Joshua Reynolds was engaged on

a portrait of her mother and another child. Sir Joshua was so much struck by her costume that he insisted on painting her portrait in it.

It looks very much as if we should know soon whether America is to be subdued or saved by a French war. We heard on Tuesday last that Dr. Franklin himself was landed in France—no equivocal step; and on Wednesday came a full explanation. General Howe had made two movements, that threatened enclosing Washington, and cutting him off from his magazines: a small engagement ensued, in which the Americans were driven from a post without much loss on either side. Washington has since retired with his whole army to other heights, about five miles off, seeming to intend to protract the war, as was always thought would be their wisest way; but, as the Americans do not behave very heroically, and as the King's fleet will now be masters of the coast, it is supposed that Washington must retire northward, and that the Howes will make great progress in the south, if not prevented by the rigour of the season. As nearly as I can make out, Dr. Franklin must have sailed a day or two after Washington's retreat; and therefore it is natural to conclude that he is come to tell France that she must directly interpose and protect the Americans, or that the Americans must submit to such terms as they can obtain. If I am not wrong in my reasons, the question is thus brought to a short issue, and there I leave it. I am never fond of speculations, and not at all so when I am not quite well. Adieu!

1741. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Dec. 23, 1776.

I know, Madam, I ought to have thanked your Ladyship immediately for your very friendly letter, but I have been too much out of order even to dictate. Though just now I am out of pain, I am so unwell that I conclude there is a mass of gout moulding itself for the rest of my limbs,

though hitherto it has kept closely to my right arm. I did most assuredly intend to be at Amptill this Christmas, and my project was to have asked you last Tuesday when it should be. I heartily repent that I did not make my visit when I was able: I ought to have remembered that I must take time by the forelock, especially considering how few hairs are left in that lock for me.

The party you are so good as to propose to me, Madam, would be very agreeable indeed, if it could do anything but tantalize me; and I am sad company for the young or healthful. I must not think of going anywhither but with Wolsey's speech in my mouth, 'Father Abbot, I am come to lay my weary bones amongst you!' I am sure I have nothing else to carry!

So, the Howes did not think their prodigious victory worth writing a line about! They little know that if they did but send us a bantam egg we can hatch an ostrich from it. I do not know what ardour anybody may have to confer with Dr. Franklin, but I do not believe the Doctor will condescend to be at home to an Englishman. They say Lord S.¹ took infinite pains for an interview with Silas Dean; and when he did at last bring it about, he might as well have obtained a personal audience from the Grand Signior without an interpreter.

As I have no resource but in quartos in the few moments when I can do anything, I am reading the *Life of Philip II*, by a professor of St. Andrews². I sent for it to see how a Scotchman would celebrate the barbarities of Philip, Cardinal Granville, and the Duke of Alva, in the United Provinces; but to my utter astonishment the man does not, as most biographers do, when they write the life of

LETTER 1741.—¹ Lord Stormont, Ambassador at Paris.

² Robert Watson, LL.D., appointed

Principal of St. Salvator's College in 1777; d. 1781.

a Charles I, or a Richard III, fall in love with his hero. On the contrary, he is so just and explicit, that I believe even Dr. Franklin would admit him to kiss his hand. But I have read only the first volume: the author may come about: the second tome of many a man is a contradiction to his first. Adieu, Madam, I wish I could distribute all the happiness I miss upon your Christmas.

1742. TO THE COMTESSE DE VIRY.

[1776.]

LADY Weymouth¹ m'a dit, Madame, que vous me reprochiez de ne vous avoir pas envoyé la Vie de Mr. Gray² comme je vous l'avais promis. J'avoue à ma honte que vous avez raison, et que vous me rendriez justice si vous me grondiez sans pitié. Cependant comme il n'y a si mauvaise cause qui puisse se défendre, il me semble que si j'avois un peu d'éloquence, je désarmerois non seulement votre colère, mais je craindrois de vous voir comme Niobé, convertie en pierre à force de pleurer. En un mot, la goutte m'a mis à la torture depuis quatre mois; or, je ne sais comment cela se fait, mais les douleurs excessives ne me rappellent jamais rien d'agréable. Comment s'attendre donc que les angoisses, l'apothicaire Graham, les flanelles, et une chaise longue pussent rappeler à ma mémoire l'esprit, la vivacité, la bonne humeur et la gaieté? Bien loin de cela, Madame, je vous proteste que quand Lady Weymouth prononça votre nom, je me réveillai comme sortant d'un rêve. Il m'est arrivé comme

LETTER 1742.—Not in C.; now first printed from MS. copy, annotated by Walpole, in possession of Mr. W. R. Parker-Jervis. The letter is unknown except in the translation, which was made (probably for Madame du Deffand's benefit) by the Rev. Louis Dutens, author of *Souvenirs d'un Voyageur qui se repose*.

¹ Lady Weymouth was a daughter of the Duke of Portland, and Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Charlotte. *Walpole*.

² *The Life of Mr. Gray*, by Mr. Mason. Miss Speed was one of the heroines of Mr. Gray's *Long Story*. *Walpole*.

au sultan des Mille et Une Nuits, qui ayant plongé sa tête dans une cuve d'eau, s'imagine avoir passé vingt ans dans la pauvreté et dans la misère, et quand il sortit sa tête hors de l'eau, se trouva au milieu de sa cour, et aussi sultan que jamais. Je me ressouviens à présent qu'au mois d'Août et de Septembre dernier, j'ai vu Madame de Viry³ fêter toute la France, répandant la gaieté au milieu des cérémonies, mettant la foule à son aise, et paraissant elle-même aussi gaie, aussi amusante et amusée que si (au lieu d'avoir imaginé des projets de pompe et de plaisirs pour tout Versailles et Paris) il y avoit eu des légions de fées et de grâces occupées à l'amuser⁴. Vous voyez, Madame, par la vérité de ce portrait que j'ai certainement recouvré mes sens et ma mémoire, qu'il falloit que j'eusse perdus quand je vous oubliai. À l'avenir je craindrois plus que jamais la goutte, n'ayant pas su jusqu'à présent qu'elle attaquoit ma tête.

Lady Temple⁵, Lord and Lady Edgcumbe et Lord Nuneham qui m'ont consolé dans mon béquillage⁶, et en ont été témoins, m'ont caché avec soin cette fâcheuse partie de ma situation. Mais je suis désolé de cette découverte, et à moins qu'au lieu

³ Miss Speed was brought up by the Lady Viscountess Cobham, who left her above forty thousand pounds. She married Le Baron de Perrier, only son of the Comte de Virri, Ambassador to England from Sardinia, whom he succeeded in the titles of Virri, and was himself Ambassador in Spain and France. Madame de Virri had a great deal of wit. *Walpole*.

⁴ Mr. Walpole was in Paris in 1775, when Madame, eldest sister of Louis XVI, was married to the Prince of Piemont. Monsr. and Madame de Virri made great entertainments on that occasion, and all that is said here of her address is strictly true. They were soon after disgraced, recalled, and banished to

their estate on the King of Sardinia's discovering a secret correspondence between the Count and a clerk in the Secretary's office, the true history of which is not known. *Walpole*.

⁵ These were particular friends of Miss Speed before her leaving England. Anna Chamber, Countess Temple, was niece by marriage of Lady Cobham. George, Lord Edgcumbe, was the third Baron and first Viscount of that family: his wife was daughter and heiress of Dr. Gilbert, Archbishop of York. George Simon, Lord Nuneham, was the second Earl of Harcourt. *Walpole*.

⁶ I do not recollect what the word was in the original. *Walpole*.

de me blâmer vous ne me disiez que vous avez pitié de moi, je suis menacé d'une rechute. Mais je me flatte que Mr. Gray fera ma paix ; ses lettres vous mettront ou plutôt vous entre-tiendront tellement en bonne humeur que vous oublierez mon oubli et me croirez encore, Madame,

Votre, etc.⁷

⁷ This letter was certainly written in English. I do not know by whom it was translated. Madame du Def-

fand did not understand a word of English. *Walpole.*

OXFORD
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LETTERS OF
HORACE WALPOLE

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK



*Horace Walpole and Hon. Mrs Damer
from a painting by Angelica Kauffmann*

THE LETTERS
OF
HORACE WALPOLE
FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED
AND EDITED WITH NOTES AND INDICES

BY
MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES
WITH PORTRAITS AND FACSIMILES

VOL. X: 1777—1779

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

MCMIV

OXFORD

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BY HORACE HART, M.A.

PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

CONTENTS OF VOL. X

	PAGES
LIST OF PORTRAITS	vi
LIST OF LETTERS IN VOLUME X	vii-xii
LETTERS 1743-1960	1-455

LIST OF PORTRAITS

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| HORACE WALPOLE AND HON. MRS. DAMER . . .
<i>From painting by Angelica Kauffmann in possession of</i>
Earl Waldegrave. | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| ADMIRAL HON. AUGUSTUS KEPPEL . . .
<i>From painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in National</i>
Portrait Gallery. | <i>To face p. 293</i> |
| BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
<i>From medallion by Jean Baptiste Nini in National</i>
Portrait Gallery. | „ 425 |

LIST OF LETTERS IN VOL. X

T

C

1777.

1743	Jan. 1, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1622
1744	Jan. 7, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1623
1745	Jan. 15, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1626
1746	Jan. 19, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1627
1747	Jan. 24, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1628
1748	Jan. 26, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1629
1749	Feb. 6, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1630
1750	Feb. 17, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1631
1751	Feb. 20, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1632
1752	Feb. 27, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1633
1753	Feb. 27, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1634
1754	March 5, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1635
1755	March 13, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1636
1756	March 28, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1637
1757	April 3, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1638
1758	April 5, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1639
1759	April 18, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1640
1760	April 28, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1641
1761	May 2, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1642
1762	May 14, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1643
1763	May 16 [1777] . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1727
1764	May 22, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1644
1765†	May 23, 1777 . . .	Sir William Hamilton.	
1766	May 28, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole.	
1767	June 9, 1777. . .	John Robinson.	
1768	June 10, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1645
1769	June 10, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1734
1770	June 15, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1646
1771	June 18, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1647
1772	June 19, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1648
1773	June 29, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1649
1774	July 6, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1650
1775	July 6, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . .	1651
1776	July 7, 1777 . . .	Viscount Nuneham . . .	1652

† Now printed for the first time.

T	C
1777 July 9, 1777 . . .	George Hardinge.
1778 July 10, 1777 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1653
1779 July 13, 1777 . . .	Robert Jephson . . . 1654
1780 July 15, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1655
1781 July 17, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1656
1782 July 19, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1657
1783 Aug. 4, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1658
1784 Aug. 8, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1659
1785 Aug. 11, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1660
1786 Aug. 19, 1777 . . .	Lady Cecilia Johnston . . 1661
1787 Aug. 24, 1777 . . .	Viscount Nuneham . . . 1662
1788 Aug. 24, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1663
1789 Aug. 31, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1664
1790 Sept. 1, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1665
1791 Sept. 8, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1666
1792 Sept. 10, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1667
1793 Sept. 16, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1668
1794 Sept. 16, 1777 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1669
1795 Sept. 18, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1670
1796 Sept. 18, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1671
1797 Sept. 20, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1672
1798 Sept. 21, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1673
1799 Sept. 22, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1674
1800 Sept. 28, 1777 . . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1675
1801 Sept. 29, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1676
1802 Oct. 1, 1777 . . .	Robert Jephson . . . 1677
1803 Oct. 2, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole.
1804 Oct. 5, 1777 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1678
1805 Oct. 5, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1679
1806 Oct. 8, 1777 . . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1680
1807 Oct. 8, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1681
1808 Oct. 15, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1684
1809 Oct. 17, 1777 . . .	Robert Jephson . . . 1682
1810 Oct. 18, 1777 . . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1683
1811 Oct. 24, 1777 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1686
1812 Oct. 26, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1687
1813 Oct. 28, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1688
1814 Oct. 30, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1689
1815 Monday night, Nov. 3	Countess of Upper Ossory . {1859 1860
1816 Nov. 6, 1777 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1690
1817 Nov. 7, 1777 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1691
1818 Nov. 8, 1777 . . .	Robert Jephson.

T	C
1819 Nov. 13, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1692
1820 Nov. 26, 1777 . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1685
1821 Dec. 4, 1777 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1693
1822 Dec. 5, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1694
1823 Dec. 11, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1695
1824 Dec. 17, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1696
1825 Dec. 23, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1697
1826 Saturday morning .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1766
1827 Dec. 27, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1698
1828 Dec. 29, 1777 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1699

1778.

1829 Jan. 4, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1700
1830 Jan. 8, 1777 [1778] .	Earl of Upper Ossory . . 1624
1831 Jan. 17, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1701
1832 Jan. 24, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1702
1833 [Feb. 1778] . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1767
1834 Feb. 4, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1703
1835 Feb. 4, 1778 . .	Earl of Strafford.
1836 Feb. 6, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1704
1837 Feb. 12, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1705
1838 Feb. 18, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1706
1839 Feb. 18, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1707
1840 March 4, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1708
1841 March 5, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1709
1842 [March 1778] . .	Rev. William Mason. Part of 1701
1843 March 16, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1710
1844 March 17, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1711
1845 March 26, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1712
1846 March 27, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1713
1847 March 31, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1714
1848 April 8, 1778. . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1715
1849 April 9, 1778. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1716
1850 April 16, 1778 . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1717
1851 April 18, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1718
1852 [April 1778] . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1719
1853 April 23, 1778 . .	Charles Bedford. . . . 1720
1854 April 23, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1721
1855 [May 1778] . .	Edward Gibbon 1782
1856 May 6, 1778 . .	Earl Harcourt 1722
1857 May 9, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann 1723
1858 May 10, 1778 . .	Duchess of Gloucester . . 1724

T		C
1859	May 12, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1725
1860	May 15, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1726
1861	May 21, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1728
1862	May 23, 1778 . .	William Barrett.
1863	May 26, 1778 . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1729
1864	May 31, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1730
1865	May 31, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1731
1866	June 3, 1778. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1732
1867	June 10, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1733
1868	June 16, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1735
1869	June 25, 1778 . .	Countess of Ailesbury . . 1736
1870	June 26, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1737
1871	July 4, 1778 . . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1738
1872	July 7, 1778 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1739
1873	July 8, 1778 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1740
1874	July 12, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1741
1875	July 16, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1742
1876	July 18, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1743
1877	July 18, 1778 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1744
1878	July 22, 1778 . .	Charles Bedford. . . . 1745
1879	July 24, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1746
1880	July 24, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1747
1881	Aug. 4, 1778. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1748
1882	Aug. 10, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1749
1883	Aug. 15, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1750
1884	Aug. 21, 1778 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1751
1885	Aug. 22, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1752
1886	Aug. 25, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1753
1887	Aug. 25, 1778 . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1754
1888	Aug. 2[6?], 1778 .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1755
1889	Sept. 1, 1778. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1756
1890	Sept. 10, 1778 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1759
1891	Sept. 17, 1778 . .	Earl Harcourt 1757
1892	Sept. 17, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann 1758
1893	Sept. 27, 1778 . .	Earl Harcourt 1760
1894	Oct. 5, 1778 . . .	Earl of Orford 1761
1895	Oct. 8, 1778 . . .	Sir Horace Mann 1762
1896	Oct. 9, 1778 . . .	Earl Harcourt 1763
1897	[Oct. 1778]	Earl Harcourt 1765
1898	[Oct. 1778]	Earl Harcourt 1764
1899	Oct. 11, 1778. . .	Rev. William Mason. . . 1768
1900	Oct. 14, 1778. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1769
1901	Oct. 23, 1778. . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1770

T		C
1902	Oct. 26, 1778. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1771
1903	Oct. 26, 1778. . .	Hon. Thomas Walpole.
1904	Oct. 30, 1778. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1772
1905	Nov. 4, 1778. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1773
1906	Nov. 5, 1778. . .	Lady Browne . . . 1774
1907	Nov. 16, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann' . . . 1775
1908	Nov. 27, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1776
1909	Dec. 18, 1778 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1777
1910	Dec. 18, 1778 . .	Lady Browne . . . 1778
1911	Dec. 24, 1778 . .	Earl of Buchan . . . 1781

1779.

1912	Jan. 3, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1783
1913	Jan. 3, 1779 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1784
1914	Jan. 5, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1785
1915	Jan. 9, 1779 . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway 1786
1916	Jan. 14, 1779. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1787
1917	Jan. 15, 1779. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1788
1918	Jan. 28, 1779. . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1789
1919	Jan. 29, 1779. . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1790
1920	[Jan. 1779] . . .	Edward Gibbon . . . 1804
1921	Feb. 1, 1779 . .	Earl Harcourt . . . 1791
1922	Feb. 1, 1779 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1792
1923	Feb. 4, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1793
1924	Feb. 11, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1794
1925	Feb. 17, 1779 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1795
1926	Feb. 18, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1796
1927	Feb. 18, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1797
1928	Feb. 23, 1779 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1798
1929	Feb. 25, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1799
1930	March 9, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1800
1931	March 12, 1779 . .	Lord Hailes . . . 1801
1932	March 22, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1802
1933	March 28, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1803
1933*	† April 6, 1779 . .	Thomas Astle.
1934	April 8, 1779 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory . 1805
1935	April 12, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1806
1936	April 17, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1807
1937	April 20, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1808
1938	April 23, 1779 . .	Rev. William Cole . . . 1809
1939	April 24, 1779 . .	Sir Horace Mann . . . 1811

† Now printed for the first time.

T		C	
1940	Thursday [May 6, 1779]	Countess of Upper Ossory	Part of 1692
1941	May 9, 1779 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1812
1942	May 21, 1779 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1813
1943	May 22, 1779 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1814
1944	May 29, 1779 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1815
1945	June 2, 1779 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1816
1946	June 4, 1779 . . .	Dr. Lort	1817
1947	June 5, 1779 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1818
1948	June 16, 1779 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	1819
1949	June 16, 1779 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1820
1950†	June 19, 1779 . . .	Sir Horace Mann.	
1951	June 22, 1779 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1821
1952	June 30, 1779 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1822
1953	July 4, 1779 . . .	George Hardinge . . .	1823
1954	July 5, 1779 . . .	George Augustus Selwyn .	1824
1955	July 6, 1779 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1825
1956	July 7, 1779 . . .	Sir Horace Mann . . .	1826
1957	July 10, 1779 . . .	Countess of Ailesbury . .	1827
1958	July 12, 1779 . . .	Rev. William Cole . . .	1828
1959	July 14, 1779 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	1829
1960	Friday night [1779].	Countess of Ailesbury . .	1836

† Now printed for the first time.

THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

1743. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 1, 1777.

If pain and total helplessness are illness, I was, indeed, very bad, my dear Madam, when I dispatched my last note to Ampthill. I think my disorder had its crisis on Sunday. By the help of quieting draughts, I have had three good nights since, and not much pain. As I feel no new attack anywhere else, I begin to venture to flatter myself that my feet will escape; and for my hands, they must wait for the pity of the weather before they can recover. I should not have said so much on myself, but to excuse my having said so little in gratitude for your Ladyship's letters.

Till Monday, I was able to see nobody at all, and now that I should be glad to see a few, there is not a soul in town to come. Mr. Gibbon, who called yesterday, is gone to Sussex to-day for a fortnight. I told him I could not conceive how anybody that has not the gout, and might go to Ampthill, could go anywhere else.

Lady Paine¹, who called here last Friday night with Lady Lucan, when I was not able to receive them, was taken ill that very night, and has been in great danger ever since:

LETTER 1743.—¹ Frances, daughter of Henry, Baron Kolbel of the Holy Roman Empire; m. (1767) Ralph

Payne, afterwards K.B., and first Baron Lavington; d. 1830.

the message this morning is a little more favourable; everybody that knows her must be in great pain for her. I am in hopes George² will arrive from Bath to-night, and the Beauclerks in about a week. If I have no return, I shall be able, probably, in some few days, to write a line or two with my own hand, and be in better spirits, which are not quite recovered yet.

1744. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

January 7, 1777.

I BEGIN a letter, Madam, long before it will get into its chaise, because being as slow an operation as engraving, I must take due time, or you will arrive in town before it sets out. That I am at all recovered is a prodigy in such weather: perhaps the gout is frozen, and my pains may return on a thaw. At present I am tolerably free, but still have a bootikin on each hand, and write with a bear's paw.

I saw long ago the passage your Ladyship took the trouble to transcribe. To be cited so honourably by Voltaire would be flattering, indeed, if he had not out of envy taken pains to depreciate all the really great authors of his own country, and of this; and what sort of judgement is that which decries Shakespeare and commends *me*?

I have seen Mr. Crawford twice, which I think a great deal, considering how little he can be entertained here, and that he is sure I will join him in no Io Pæans. In truth, I know there is a great deal of water mixed with the wine of all the late bumpers; nay, I believe, echo will still drink her glass.

January 8.

I have just got an account of Lord Villiers's play¹. It

² George Selwyn.
LETTER 1744 —¹ *The Provoked Hus-*

band and Pygmalion (by Rousseau),
performed at Bolney Court near

went off to admiration ; and Le Texier, which, I believe, was inimitable. Indeed, considering what an Iceland night it was, I concluded the company and audience would all be brought to town in waggons petrified, and stowed in a statuaries yard in Piccadilly. Has your Ladyship dipped into Mr. Ayscough's² *Semiramis*? Read it you could not ; it is the very worst of all our late trash. Mr. Colman says it is Voltaire 'a-scue'—I know not how to spell that word. My poor head will not let me say any more, and news I know none.

1745. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

January 15, 1777.

AN invalid's room is commonly a coffee-house, and as I know no news, I must suppose there is none. Indeed, the town is so empty, that my circles have been small ; but then there are so few of those I wish to see in town, that I have asked nobody, but trusted to chance customers. My right hand is still a good deal swelled, and has not yet moulted its covering. Loyalty and love of dress will bring up the world by Saturday. When will anything bring your Ladyship and Lord Ossory ? Mr. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Fox were to leave Paris last Sunday ; perhaps they may wait to see the Emperor¹.

Sir Ralph Paine made me a visit t'other day, and not knowing what to say to him, I asked him how he liked his new house in Grafton Street ; he replied, its *centricity* made it very agreeable.

It is scarce decent to send such a scrap as a letter, but

Henley-on-Thames by Lord Villiers and other amateurs. For a full account of the performances see *Passages from the Diaries of Mrs. Powys*, pp. 178-94.

² George Edward Ayscough (d.

1779), son of Dr. Francis Ayscough, Dean of Bristol, and first cousin of second Baron Lyttelton.

LETTER 1745.—¹ Joseph II, who visited Paris this year, travelling as Count von Falkenstein.

I protest I have nothing to add to it. I am so glad to be able to move my fingers again, that I should be proud to fill a sheet. Your Ladyship, I know, will excuse me, and take me as I happen. In any case, I shall rejoice to exchange seeing you for writing.

P.S. I have a charming story about Madame du Deffand and Dr. Franklin, that will divert your Ladyship, but I have neither time nor fingers for it now.

1746. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Sunday, January 19, 1777.

You may imagine, Madam, how much I was touched with Lady Anne's¹ sensibility for me! and to give you some proof of mine, the very next reflection was, that I was sorry she promises to have so much. It is one of those virtues, whose kingdom is not of this world, but, like patience, is for ever tried, with the greater disadvantage of wanting power to remedy half the misfortunes it feels for. Sensibility is one of the master-springs, on which most depends the colour of our lives, and determines our being happy or miserable. I have often said that this world is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel; and sensibility has not only occasion to suffer for others, but is sure of its own portion too. Had I children, and the option of bestowing dispositions on them, I should be strangely puzzled to decide. Could one refuse them feelings that make them amiable, or confer what ensures unhappiness? But indeed on what could one decide, were the fate of others or one's own left to our arbitrement?

I have no opinion of my own wisdom, and little of any-

LETTER 1746.—¹ Lady Anne Fitzpatrick, daughter of Lord and Lady Ossory.

body's else ; but I have an odd system, that what is called *chance* is the instrument of Providence and the secret agent that counteracts what men call wisdom, and preserves order and regularity, and continuation in the whole ; for you must know, Madam, that I firmly believe, notwithstanding all our complaints, that almost every person upon earth tastes upon the totality more happiness than misery ; and therefore, if we could correct the world to our fancies, and with the best intentions imaginable, probably we should only produce more misery and confusion. This totally contradicts what I said before, that sensibility or insensibility determines the complexion of our lives ; and yet if the former casts a predominating shade of sadness over the general tenor of our feelings, still that gloom is illumined with delicious flashes. It enjoys the comforts of the compassion it bestows, and of the misfortune it relieves ; and the largest dose of the apathy of insensibility can never give any notion of the transport that thrills through the nerves of benevolence when it consoles the anguish of another ; but I am too much a sceptic to pretend to make or reconcile a system and its contradictions. No man was ever yet so great as to build that system in which other men could not discover flaws. All our reasoning, therefore, is very imperfect, and this is *my* reason for being so seldom serious, and for never disputing. I look upon human reason as I do on the parts of a promising child—it surprises, may improve or stop short, but is not come to maturity ; and therefore, if you please, I will talk of the Birthday, and things more suited to my capacity.

I had a shining circle on the evening of that great solemnity ; the Duke and Duchess of Richmond, Lady Pembroke, Lady Strafford, Mr. Conway, and Lady Ailesbury, in all their gorgeous attire. Lady Warwick, I hear, looked charmingly : but pray, Madam, must you, to possess Miss

Vernon to the last minute, lock her and yourself up in the country? You make no answer to my question of when you come. I can allow you but one week more. I propose to take the air on Thursday and Friday, to air myself at Strawberry on Saturday and Sunday, and be ready on the Monday to wait on you in Grosvenor Place.

Lord Dillon told me this morning that Lord Besborough and he, playing at quinze t'other night with Miss Pelham, and happening to laugh, she flew into a passion and said, 'It was terrible to play with *boys*!'—'and our two ages together,' said Lord Dillon, 'make up above a hundred and forty.'

Sir George Warren lost his diamond order in the Council Chamber at the Birthday in the crowd of loyal subjects. Part of Georgia is said to be returned to its allegiance to King George and Lord George². Charles Fox, I just hear, is arrived, and, I conclude, Mr. Fitzpatrick. My awkward hand has made a thousand blots, but I cannot help it.

Sunday night.

Mr. Fitzpatrick is not come; but I hope, what I hear is not true, that he is going to America.

Monday.

A person has just been here, and told me terrible news: an express is come that yesterday morning all Bristol was in flames³, and that Elliot's Horse is sent thither! How dreadful! This comes of teaching the Americans to burn towns! It will be a blessed war before it is over.

² Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

³ The fires which broke out at Bristol on and after Jan. 16, 1777, were the work of an incendiary, James Aitken (1752-1777), known as 'John the Painter.' He set fire to

the rope-house in Portsmouth Dock-yard in Dec. 1776. He tried to destroy the shipping and city of Bristol, but only succeeded in burning some warehouses. Aitken was tried and executed in the following March.

1747. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Jan. 24, 1777.

IN my last, a month ago, I told you I had the gout. It is now gone, and I have been once out to take the air. As I love to make the best of everything, I call this a short and favourable fit, having, from its first moment to my airing, lasted *but* six weeks; and, though I had it in both hands, wrists, and elbows, there was not much pain for above thirty hours; and my feet escaped. These *douceurs* I attribute to the bootikins. It is true that, for these last three years, the fits have been annual, instead of biennial; but if they are split into more frequent, though much shorter portions, I must still be satisfied; for could I go through five months and a half of pain? I am already so shattered with these attacks, that my nerves are as alarmable as the sensitive-plant. The clapping of a door suddenly makes me start and tremble; and yet I don't find my spirits affected. In fact, my inside is so strong, and the case so very weak, that I believe the cottage will tumble down, and I shall have nothing but the inside left. I am thinking of going to Bath or to the seaside, which has often been of service; not, to say the truth, that I suppose it will, but one is to try, and to pretend to suppose it will. Old people always talk as if they expected cures—but surely they cannot; surely they cannot forget how they used to laugh at the seniors who had such idle hopes! But enough, and too much of myself.

The tide of victories continues: Fort Washington was taken at the end of the year¹, and Rhode Island since. A great deal is still to do, and not much less if the war was over. It does not appear yet that Dr. Franklin has per-

suaded France to espouse America openly. One hears a great deal of underhand support, and in general the disposition of the French is for war with us; but I never believe but on facts, seldom reports, and seldomer prophecies and conjectures; chance being the great mistress of human affairs in the *dernier ressort*.

The Parliament is met, but, as the opposition does not attend, for these last two days they could not get a House of one hundred members; which is necessary, since Mr. Grenville's bill, if an election is to be heard. We were alarmed on Sunday with an account of Bristol being in flames, and of several attempts to fire that city and Portsmouth. It turns out almost nothing at all, and not above the pitch of insurers. There was a silly story of two new-invented engines for firing being found in the lodgings of the supposed incendiary, together with an account of the St. Barthélemi and Dr. Price's² pamphlet for the Americans. If true, it indicated a madman.

Your lord paramount, the Emperor, is coming to Paris: he does not come hither—he needs not. We have transplanted the flowers of our follies thither—horse-racing and gaming; and our chief missionaries preside over the rites. My poor hand is so weak that you must dispense with my writing you no longer a letter. For eight days I underwent the humiliation of being fed; and, when one comes to one's pap again, no wonder one thinks oneself ancient. Adieu!

² Richard Price, D.D. (1723-1791), a Dissenting minister. The pamphlet in question was *Observations on Civil Liberty and the Justice and Policy of the War with America*, published in

1776. It is stated 'that the encouragement derived from this book had no inconsiderable share in determining the Americans to declare their independence.' (*D. N. B.*)

1748. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

January 26, 1777.

GIVE me leave to say your Ladyship quite misunderstood one paragraph in my last. Never was anything farther from my thoughts than to accuse you of keeping your sisters too long in the country. Where upon earth could they be so well as under your care? Who would take such care of them? Who would educate and form them so well? Where could they lead so rational and at the same time so agreeable a life? And where would they be farther from seeing or hearing anything that would pervert their minds? And pray where could they be witnesses to more sensible felicity? Do you imagine, Madam, that I think it necessary that they should be married at fifteen in order to enlarge the circle of some Machiavelian aunt's political influence? Indeed, I had no such idea; and, begging the pardon of the young ladies, they were not concerned in my question.

It was your Ladyship was my object: I meant to ask if you intended to stay at Amptill as long as you could keep Miss Vernon there. With all the encomiums you shower on me, it is plain I do not express myself intelligibly. As to sensible letters, I will never write one. I declare I don't know what is sense, and what not. I have lived to doubt whether I have any one just and right idea about anything. Nothing I thought truth and sense from my infancy seems any longer to be so. All the virtues that were crowned with palms in Greek, Roman, and English story pass for errors. I thought that liberty, for which England has struggled and fought for seven hundred years, was natural and dear to Englishmen. No such thing. I have seen a popish rebellion crushed in Scotland, and half England

enraged at the Duke of Cumberland for saving them from chains. I now see all England exulting on every defeat of their own countrymen, who are fighting for our liberty as well as their own; and can I think I have any sense? Ought not I to believe that Mr. Locke was an old woman, and that we ought to say in our political litany as we do in our religious, 'Thy service is perfect freedom'! No, Madam, no: I have done with sense, though too old to learn the folly in fashion. I have often been of opinion that it was not designed we should be able to distinguish certainly *what is truth*. Pilate asked the person most likely to resolve him; and received no answer. I will therefore wait with patience; it will not be such a vast while, till the time that our doubts will be cleared up. Till then, pray allow me to stick to my old-fashioned nonsense; for though the sense of the age is so much improved, I don't think its nonsense is; and, besides, it is more becoming to an old man to dote in his own way, than to adopt the follies of a much more recent generation, which never sit well upon him,—at least they would not on me. I do not say that there are not old gentlemen that can cast their skins, and come out at three-score as sleek as Adonis. Lord George Germaine can look as well as Alexander, in laurels gathered by proxy, or rather like Queen Eleanor¹, could sink at Charing Cross, and rise at *King-Hithe*. I am no such didapper²; and if it is only for the singularity, will die as I lived with all my old errors and prejudices about me.

Lord Ossory has been exceedingly charitable, though I was an errant beggar, for I put off my frisk to Strawberry for two days on purpose to see more of him. I tell your Ladyship nothing, for he will tell you all—if there is anything, which is more than I know. I send you some

LETTER 1748.—¹ See note on letter to Montagu of Nov. 8, 1759.

² A small diving water-fowl; a dabchick.

French books by him for the remainder of your solitude. I am sorry to quit mine, though latterly I have had company enough; but it is comfortable to sit at home, and see as many as one wishes; and still more comfortable *just now*, to see very few of those one dislikes. In short, not to be often wished joy of what one is very sorry for! and, alas! I am too old to go to France, and find many people that love liberty, though perhaps I must go thither if I desire to preserve my own. It is very indifferent where one ends, provided one is consistent. I look with scorn and horror on change of principles: it is a proof one never had any, if interest is the alternative. If this country loses its freedom, how will the names of all those who sacrificed it be execrated by their posterity! by their posterity in chains, or in the Bastille!

P.S. I must beg to have my books again.

1749. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 6, 1777.

YOUR account of your brother Edward's conduct and behaviour on James's death, and his breach of promises to you and your nephew, cannot surprise me after what I unfortunately know of him. It is a story I did not mean to tell you—but since you know him too, it is not necessary to conceal it from you. Twenty years ago a very good place being vacant in the Customs under Sir Edward and me, in the place your brother then held, and you now hold for us, we appointed Mr. Challis, the next in succession, to the office—but as I had promised a place in that branch to Mr. Bentley, who being then under misfortunes could not execute it, I said Mr. Challis should pay to Mr. Bentley 100*l.* a year out of his new

place. Your brother at that time, and *very often* since, reproached me with that transaction, and asked me what I would say if ever any complaint should be made in Parliament of quartering on places? I said, 'Mr. Mann, nothing will be more ready than my answer. I am neither ashamed of what I have done, nor mean to conceal it. This will be my answer. I know quartering is wrong, and though so common, I do not excuse it—but this is my plea: I had promised a place to Mr. B., a very ingenious man, and son of the famous Dr. Bentley—but as he was in trouble and absent, it was not right to give it to him; and as I could give him no other, I did give him a single hundred a year out of it.' Judge what my astonishment was on your brother's death, when Mr. Challis came to me, and said he could not pay Mr. Bentley any longer, as the bond was payable to your brother. I said, 'What bond?' He said, 'The bond for the 250*l.* a year.' I said, 'Sir, I protest I do not understand you; you was to pay Mr. Bentley but one hundred a year.'—To be short, your brother, who had so often reproached me with the hundred, had taken that very opportunity to extort 150*l.* a year more for himself, and had, by being the person to appoint the successor at my brother's and my nomination, compelled Mr. Challis to give him E. M. a bond for 250*l.*—and had received the 150*l.* himself for twenty years. Luckily he had grown ashamed to leave evidence of such an amazing transaction, and had burnt the bond—so Mr. Challis will save the annual 150*l.*, and Mr. Bentley will have his 100*l.*, which else would have gone to your brother's children. In truth, this is a heavy lesson to me, that having done wrong in a slight instance, it produced this grievous injury to Mr. Challis—but, as I ought, though not actually to blame for that injury, I have made him a present of two thousand pounds—and I owe him the justice to say, that it was with great difficulty that

I could prevail on him to accept of that compensation—you and I have reason to say that eldest brothers are not the more equitable for the predominant share they have in the fortunes of their families.

I begin to go about again, after a confinement of seven weeks. I feel no great joy in my liberty; and, had I any excuse for bringing people to me, I should not feel concerned to live at home; for all England is a public place, and nothing so difficult to find as any private society. Everything is changed; as always must happen when one grows old, and is prejudiced to one's old ways. I do not like dining at near six, nor beginning the evening at ten at night. If one does not conform, one must live alone; and that is more disagreeable and more difficult in town than in the country, where old useless people ought to live. Unfortunately, the country does not agree with me; and I am sure it is not fancy; for my violent partiality to Strawberry Hill cannot be imposed upon. I am persuaded that it is the dampness of this climate that gives me so much gout; and London, from the number of fires and inhabitants, must be the driest spot in the nation.

There is nothing new of any sort. As there is no opposition, there is no Parliament; I mean none that is talked of more than the Assizes. In America the campaign seems to be over. It is to be very warm next summer; but there will be a spring between of some consequence. Then will be seen what we are to expect from France. Your brother, the Emperor, has put off his journey thither: some think, rebuffed from Versailles; others, that storms are brewing in the north, or deaths¹ approaching that will open the floodgates. I but just touch these points; for I have no private intelligence from every court in Europe. I can see very little way into futurity, and when I think

LETTER 1749.—¹ Probability of the death of the King of Prussia. *Walpole*.

I do, I am commonly mistaken. That this country is stark mad in every respect, I am very clear; a death that great countries are apt to die of. I have but few years to come, have no children to leave, and therefore it is no wonder that the natural insensibility of age increases upon me, as well as the disposition to censure and to augur ill. In common life one thinks many persons dying before they do die—yet they do die too. One is still more in the right, though perhaps not so soon as one expects to be, when one foretells that such an one will kill himself by his intemperance. Some will think that, as our doctors have given us over, there is a better chance of our recovering. It is true I have no opinion of our doctors—the opposition; still I think the patient is in a most deplorable way, and, as in consumptions, he has no sense of his danger. Look you: all this may be speculation and vision; I do not trouble myself about the credit of my oracle. If I did, I could give two sides to my prophecy, and could tell you, that if things did not turn out very ill one way, they would another; and I could support my belief with an oath: but I am pretty indifferent about the matter when I cannot help it, and have no more notion of caring about what will happen ten years after I am dead, than about what will happen two hundred. We have been in an unnatural state, and swelled from a little island to an empire; but I doubt the island will not shrink just into its natural corpulency again; and there is a new field for speculation! But I am, luckily, at the end of my paper.

1750. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Feb. 17, 1777.

I do not know whether you will value the execution of a promise, when the letter is observed and not the spirit. I write only because you desired it, and that I said I would;

neither the literary nor political world furnish much matter. I have read *The Goat's Beard*¹: the lines on Charles II are very good, and there is true humour here and there; but the humour is often missed, and I think the whole much too long—it is far inferior to *Variety*. Mr. Tyrrwhit has at last published the Bristol poems. He does not give up the antiquity, yet fairly leaves everybody to ascribe them to Chatterton, if they please, which I think the internal evidence must force every one to do, unless the amazing prodigy of Chatterton's producing them should not seem a larger miracle than Rowley's and Canning's anticipation of the style of very modern poetry. Psalmanazar² alone seems to have surpassed the genius of Chatterton, and when that lad could perform such feats, as he certainly did, what difficulty is there in believing that Macpherson forged the cold skeleton of an epic poem, that is more insipid than *Leonidas*? Mr. Tyrrwhit seems to have dreaded drawing himself into a controversy, which joys me, who dreaded being drawn into one too.

The news from America are, as usual, difficult to be fathomed. The court denies being certain of the discomfit of the Hessians³, yet their runners pretend that the Hessian prisoners have been retaken. It is fact that the royalists have neither yet taken Providence nor the American ships: the other side believe that Lord Cornwallis has received a check at the Jerseys. Lee⁴ is certainly taken by the poltroonery of his own men, of whom he had eighteen to Colonel Harcourt's⁵ fourteen. He has written a short letter

LETTER 1750.—¹ A poem by William Whitehead, founded on a fable of Phædrus.

² George Psalmanazar (d. 1763), literary impostor.

³ On Dec. 26, 1776, nine hundred Hessians were surprised by Washington at Trenton, and obliged to surrender.

⁴ He was captured on Dec. 18, 1776, at White's Tavern, Baskinridge, by a party of the 16th Light Dragoons under Colonel Harcourt.

⁵ Colonel Hon. William Harcourt (1743–1830), second son of first Earl Harcourt; succeeded his brother as third Earl Harcourt in 1809; Field Marshal, 1821.

in which he himself says so, and adds, that he submits to his fate, only regretting that liberty will no longer enjoy a foot of earth.

The Habeas Corpus Bill⁶, you see, has appeared, though nobody would believe it. Lord Rockingham and his ingenious band have contrived to make a more ridiculous figure by doing nothing, than they ever did by anything they attempted. They are sure of not being taken up during the suspension on the suspicion of a plot. You have seen in the papers, I suppose, that 'John the Painter'⁷ is a Scot, and that he dated the conflagration at Bristol from an American merchant's house, and committed a burglary, which it is not even pretended to have been directed by the orders of the Congress.

The Landgrave of Hesse⁸, on the strength of our subsidy, is gone to Rome, to make a solemn renunciation of the Protestant religion at the feet of the Pope; who ought to declare him vice-defender of the faith against the heretics and Quakers of Philadelphia.

Mr. Palgrave is in town, and so is a third inundation of snow, yet I have gone about these three weeks and had no return of my disorder. Give me as good an account of yourself.

1751. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

DEAR SIR,

Arlington Street, Feb. 20, 1777.

You are always my oracle in any antique difficulties. I have bought at Mr. Ives's sale (immensely dear) the shutters of the altar at Edmondsbury: Mr. Ives had them from Tom Martin¹, who married Peter Leneve's widow; so you see no

⁶ A bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act with regard to the Americans.

⁷ James Aitken, the incendiary. See note on letter to Lady Ossory of Jan. 19, 1777.

⁸ Frederick II, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel; d. 1785.

LETTER 1751.—¹ Thomas Martin (1697-1771), lawyer and antiquary, known as 'Honest Tom Martin of Palgrave.'

shutters can be better descended on the mother's side. Next to high birth, personal merit is something: in that respect my shutters are far from defective—on the contrary, the figures on the inside are so very good, as to amaze me who could paint them here in the reign of Henry VI; they are worthy of the Bolognese school—but they have suffered in several places, though not considerably. Bonus is to repair them, under oath of only filling up the cracks, and restoring the peelings off; but without repainting or varnishing.

The possession of these boards, invaluable to me, was essential. They authenticate the sagacity of my guesses, a talent in an antiquary coequal with prophecy in a saint. On the outside is an archbishop, unchristened by the late possessors, but evidently Archbishop Kempe², or the same person with the prelate in my 'Marriage of Henry VI'—and you will allow, from the collateral evidence, that it must be Kempe, as I have so certainly discovered another personage in my picture. The other outside is a cardinal, called by Mr. Ives, Babington³; but I believe Cardinal Beaufort, *for* the lion of England stands by him, which a bastardly prince of the blood was more likely to assume than a true one. His face is not very like, nor very unlike, the same person in my picture; but this is shaven—but now comes the great point. On the inside is Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, kneeling—not only as exactly resembling mine as possible, but with the same almost bald head, and the precisely same furred robe. An apostle-like personage stands behind him, holding a golden chalice, as his R. Highness's offering, and, which is remarkable, the Duke's velvet cap of estate, with his coronet of strawberry-leaves. I used to say, to corroborate my hypothesis, that the skull of Duke Humphrey at

² Cardinal John Kemp or Kempe (d. 1447), Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Chancellor.

³ Probably Cardinal Repington,

Bishop of Lincoln, is meant; there was no Cardinal Babington contemporary with Kemp.

St. Alban's was very like the form of head in my picture, which argument diverted the late Lord Holland extremely—but I trust now that nobody will dispute any longer my perfect acquaintance with *all Dukes of Gloucester*.—By the way, did I ever tell you that when I published my *Historic Doubts on Richard III*, my niece's marriage not being then acknowledged, George Selwyn said he did not think I should have *doubted* about the Duke of Gloucester. On the inside of the other shutter is a man unknown: he is in a stable, as Joseph might be, but over him hangs a shield of arms, that are neither Joseph's nor Mary's. The colours are either black and white, or so changed as not to be distinguishable; but they are thus⁴. These are three bulls' heads (on the left of the shield). These are ducks or martlets, on the argent: but I have blotted them, and the middle quarter at bottom, which should be of six pieces, three charged and three plain, or the bearings lost, for this is the most damaged part. I conclude the person who is in red and white was the donor of the altar-piece, or a benefactor; and what I want of you is to discover him and his arms; and to tell me whether Duke Humphrey, Beaufort, Kempe, and Babington were connected with St. Edmundsbury, or whether this unknown person was not a retainer of Duke Humphrey, at least of the royal family.

At the same sale I bought a curious pane, that I conclude came from Blickling, with Hobart impaling Boleyn, from which latter family the former enjoyed that seat.

How does this third winter of the season agree with you? The wind to-day is sharper than a razor, and blows icicles into one's eyes. I was confined for seven weeks with the gout, yet am so well recovered as to have been abroad to-day, though it is as mild under the pole.

Pray can you tell me the title of the book that Mr. Ives

⁴ The original letter contains a drawing of arms.

dedicated to me? I never saw it, for he was so odd (I cannot call it modest, lest I should seem not so myself) as never to send it to me, and I never could get it.

Yours most truly,
H. W.

1752. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

February 27, 1777.

YOU see, dear Sir, that we thought on each other just at the same moment; but, as usual, you was thinking of obliging me, and I of giving you trouble. You have fully satisfied me of the connection between the Lancastrian princes and St. Edmundsbury. Edmondson, I conclude, will be able to find out the proprietor of the arms impaling Walrond.

I am well acquainted with Sir A. Weldon¹ and the *Aulicus Coquinariae*, and will return them with Mr. Ives's tracts, which I intend to buy at the sale of his books. Tell me how I may convey them to you most safely. You say, 'Till I show an inclination to borrow more of your MSS.' I hope you do not think my appetite for that loan is in the least diminished. I should at all minutes, and ever, be glad to peruse them all—but I was not sure you wished to lend them to me, though you deny me nothing—and my own fear of their coming to any mischance made me very modest about asking for them—but now, whenever you can send me any of them with perfect security, I eagerly and impudently ask to see them: you cannot oblige me more, I assure you.

I am sorry Dr. E.² is got into such a dirty scrape.

LETTER 1752.—¹ Sir Antony Weldon, Knight, Clerk of the Green Cloth to Elizabeth and to James I, and Clerk of the Kitchen to the latter. Weldon wrote the secret

history of the courts of James I and Charles I, and was answered by William Sanderson in *Aulicus Coquinariae*.

² Dr. William Ewin, of Cam-

There is scarce any decent medium observed at present between wasting fortunes and fabricating them; and both by any disreputable manner: for as to saving money by prudent economy, the method is too slow in proportion to consumption: even forgery³, alas! seems to be the counterpart or restorative of the ruin by gaming. I hope at least that robbery on the highway will go out of fashion as too piddling a profession for gentlemen.

I enclose a card for your friends, but must advertise them that March is in every respect a wrong month for seeing Strawberry. It not only wants its leaves and beauty then, but most of the small pictures and curiosities, which are taken down and packed up in winter, are not restored to their places till the weather is fine and I am more there. Unless they are confined in time, your friends had much better wait till May—but, however, they will be very welcome to go when they please. I am more personally interested in hoping to see you there this summer. You must visit my new tower, diminutive as it is. It adds much to the antique air of the whole in both fronts. You know I shall sympathize with your gout, and you are always master of your own hours.

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

1753. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Feb. 27, 1777.

I WAS very wise in never advertising retirement. I knew well how difficult it is to quit the world, and yet have done with it. The love of fame has its colt's-tooth as well as old

bridge, who had been detected in lending money at enormous interest to an undergraduate.

³ Probably an allusion to Dr. Dodd, who was tried and convicted of forgery on Feb. 22, 1777.

ladies. Alas! my good friend, heroes, philosophers, statesmen, have their itchings left, though their all¹ needs have been fully satisfied. Poor Mr. Garrick labours under this infirmity of age; he has complained of Mons. Le Texier for thinking of bringing over Caillaud, the French actor in the Opéra Comique, as a mortal prejudice to his reputation; and, no doubt, would be glad of an Act of Parliament that should prohibit there ever being a good actor again in any country or century. But this is not all; he has solicited King George to solicit him to read a play. The piece was quite new, *Lethe*, which their Majesties have not seen above ten times every year for the last ten years. He added three new characters equally novel, as a Lady Featherby, because the Queen dislikes feathers. The piece was introduced by a prologue *en fable*; a blackbird grown grey-haired, as blackbirds are wont to do, had retired from the world, but was called out again by the eagle. Mr. Hare² asked Garrick if his Majesty looked very like an eagle? The audience was composed of King, Queen, Princess Royal, Duchess of Argyll, Lady Egremont, Lady Charlotte Finch; the Prince of Wales was not present; and all went off perfectly ill, with no exclamations of applause and two or three formal compliments at the end. Bayes is dying of chagrin, and swears he will read no more.

My second moral example is in higher life. That old ruinous fragment of faction, Lord Temple, has had an aching gum too. Become by his separation from Lord Chatham, and by the death of his brother George, too insignificant and too impotent to overturn, awe, or even alarm the administration, he has been attempting to wriggle into a little favour by a mongrel mixture of treachery, spying,

LETTER 1753.—¹ So in *Correspondence of Walpole and Mason*; read 'all their needs.'

² James Hare (1749–1804), the wit and friend of Fox,

and *informing*, below a gentleman, and even below any Lord, but one. Affecting to be shocked at the attempt on Bristol, he employed one of his own incendiaries³ to resort to the prison where John the Painter lies, and his worthy agent, by worming himself into that man's confidence, pretends to have learnt from him that the said John had received 300*l.* from Silas Deane, for the purpose of burning, not only Bristol, Portsmouth, and Plymouth, but the Bank of England, for stone and gold are wonderfully combustible. The natural philosophers in power believe that Dr. Franklin has invented a machine of the size of a toothpick case, and materials that would reduce St. Paul's to a handful of ashes. I know a very pious seigneur that firmly believes in this revival of the nostrum of the Old Man of the Mountain—though I do not think he would like this destructibility of gold, if he did believe in it.

The capture of the Hessians is confirmed with circumstances somewhat untoward, for they were not surprised, and yet all laid down their arms as if they liked lands in America better than the wretched pittance they are to receive out of the Landgrave's dole.

It is now the fashion to cry up the manœuvre of General Washington in this action, who has beaten two English regiments, too, and obliged General Howe to contract his quarters—in short, the campaign has by no means been wound up to content.

There is a great breach in the house of Holdernessee. Dayrolle's daughter⁴ has eloped to *Leonidas* Glover's youngest son, who is a friend of Lord Carmarthen: Lady Carmarthen has harboured, and the Countess, her mother, has forbidden the daughter her court. This is my second letter. Mem. I have not had a line from you.

³ A painter named Baldwin.

⁴ Dayrolles had three daughters,

but it is impossible to say which one is here referred to.

1754. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 5, 1777.

My last has already told you, I hope, that I am entirely recovered. You shall believe, if you please, that a moment of bootikins weakened *you*; but allow *me* to be certain that above three years of experience has demonstrated that they do not weaken *me*; and as to all reasonings of the Italian physicians, why, they are still more ignorant than ours. I shall not argue with them or you, for I have no convert-making zeal. I content myself with my own judgement and experience for my own use, and it is not reasonable to expect that others should see truth with my eyes. It has rarely happened to me to think with the majority, and I have so much respect for the plural number as not to dispute with them. There never were more against me than in our present politics. I have kept my sentiments pretty much to myself, but nothing has made me change my opinion. At present, the aspect is not as if I had been totally in the wrong. The campaign in America has lost a great deal of its florid complexion, and General Washington is allowed by both sides not to be the worst general in the field. The stocks are grown positive that we shall have a French war. *That* was so self-evident, that I should be ashamed of bragging I had always foreseen it. A child might foretell many of the consequences. I leave it to those who *would not* foresee to excuse themselves as they can.

The *Gazettes* will tell you as much as you are allowed to know or believe. If you do not understand them, you will not be singular. The time is coming, I doubt, when truth will write a more legible hand. In one word, the retreat of the Americans seems to have been wise; you will find

they will fight and have fought, and that, when we believed Philadelphia was gone, General Howe has been obliged to contract his quarters. I should think less than *unlimited submission*¹ would content us at present; and I leave you to judge whether France will be omitted in the negotiation, and whether she will enjoin the Congress to be very tractable. I hope there will be a little more wisdom in making the peace than there was in making the war; *but they who make the one, do not always consider that they may not be equally masters to make the other.*

I rejoice that there is a prospect of Lady Lucy's recovery. I admire your nephew's conduct both to her and his constituents.

There is scarcely anything of private news. Two old persons that you remember are dead, Sir Thomas Robinson² and Lady Shadwell³; she lived to ninety-six. The Duke of Norfolk, but two years younger, is recovered from a dangerous illness. Lady Chesterfield⁴ has had a stroke of palsy, but may linger some time longer. In short, my dear Sir, you and I can only talk in common of a few Methusalems, cock and hen; for, as to the travelling boys that you get acquainted with *en passant*, I do not. I have done with the world, except parting with it in form; and chiefly pass my time with a few acquaintance or alone at Strawberry Hill, where I never want amusement. My old age is as agreeable as I desire it: oppressed with no misfortunes, disappointments, or infirmities,—for I am determined to consider the gout as a remedy that only makes

LETTER 1754.—¹ Lord George Germain declared in the House of Commons, when Secretary of State, that he would be content with nothing under the unlimited submission of America. *Walpole.*

² Sir Thomas Robinson, of Rokeby, commonly known as 'Long Sir Thomas.'

³ Widow of Sir John Shadwell, physician to Queen Anne.

⁴ Melusina Schulembourg, Countess of Walsingham, niece of the Duchess of Kendal, and widow of the celebrated Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield. She died in September 1778. *Walpole.*

my liberty more welcome ; with a fortune as ample as I wish either for pleasing myself or for doing some kindnesses ; indifferent to pleasures that would be ridiculous, and encumbered with no glory or vanity that would impose restraint or reserve on me. I enjoy the remnant with cheerfulness, and think I shall lay it down with no more regret than what must attend parting with what is not disagreeable. I am exceedingly thankful for the happiness of my lot, and own it has been far greater than I should have dared to ask. Can I, then, but be content when it shall terminate ? This is the thirty-seventh year of our correspondence : we are the Orestes and Pylades of letter-writers, yet I wish our meeting had left us less to boast ! Adieu !

P.S. I must add a curious story, which I believe will surprise your Italian surgeons, as much as it has amazed the faculty here. A sailor, who has broken his leg, was advised to communicate his case to the Royal Society. The account he gave was, that, having fallen from the top of the mast and fractured his leg, he had dressed it with nothing but tar and oakum, and yet in three days was able to walk as well as before the accident. The story at first appeared quite incredible, as no such efficacious qualities were known in tar, and still less in oakum ; nor was a poor sailor to be credited on his own bare assertion of so wonderful a cure. The Society very reasonably demanded a fuller relation, and, I suppose, the corroboration of evidence. Many doubted whether the leg had been really broken. That part of the story had been amply verified. Still it was difficult to believe that the man had made use of no other applications than tar and oakum ; and how *they* should cure a broken leg in three days, even if they could cure it at all, was a matter of the utmost wonder. Several letters

passed between the Society and the patient, who persevered in the most solemn asseverations of having used no other remedies, and it does appear beyond a doubt that the man speaks truth. It is a little uncharitable, but I fear there are surgeons who might not like this abbreviation of attendance and expense. But, on the other hand, you will be charmed with the plain honest simplicity of the sailor: in a postscript to his last letter he added these words: 'I forgot to tell your honours that the leg was a wooden one.' Was there ever more humour? What would one have given to have been present, and seen the foolish faces of the wise assembly? I am an unworthy member of that learned body, and never attend their meetings, which I now regret; I should have been paid for many dull hours: but I never had patience for such solemn assemblies, and have neglected that of the Arts and Sciences, as well as the Royal. I shut myself entirely out of the Antiquarian Society and Parliament, the archiepiscopal seats of folly and knavery.

1755. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

March 13, 1777.

So you think I have always something to say because I live in London? If I have, I am sure novelty does not constitute my cargo. The present world seems composed of forgery and informers, and the peers dignify the latter list, and may perhaps the former: I am not ambitious of being their historian. One Dignam¹, a candidate for the borough of Hindon, and Parliament, had given information of a plot against the King's life, which he had invented,

LETTER 1755. — ¹ David Brown Dignam, tried on April 2 on a charge of defrauding Mr. Clarke of upwards of £700 under pretence of procuring him the appointment of Clerk of

the Minutes in the Dublin Custom House. He was found guilty, and sentenced 'to work five years upon the river Thames.'

and it neither producing a place for him nor Lord Temple, he took to selling places to others, which all his merit could not obtain for himself—and so he is only in Newgate. This is a specimen of town news. It is better to be at York, than write memoirs of Mrs. Grieve, Mrs. Rudd, Dr. Dodd, Mr. Dignam, and Lord Temple.

Hume's *Life*, written by himself, is just published. It is a nothing, a brief account of his disappointments on his irreligious works making no noise at first, and his historic making some. He boasts that in the latter he dared to revive the cause of despotism—a great honour truly to a philosopher; and he speaks of your friend, Bishop Hurd, with a freedom, that I dare to say the whole court will profess to his Lordship they think monstrous rudeness. My Lord H.², whose piety could swallow Hume's infidelity, will be shocked now that he should have employed such a brute.

The *Memoirs and Miscellaneous Works of Lord Chesterfield* are come out too. They are in two huge quartos, drawn up by Dr. Maty³ and his son, and compiled chiefly from pamphlets. I am got but a little way into them with small edification, yet I have found a new anecdote or two, that are curious, and there are some of his *bons mots* that will be new to others. In the second volume are several of his French letters to a Madame de Monconseil, whom I know. She was married to a French officer, and when I was first recommended to her above thirty years ago, her mother kept a gaming-house, and the daughter has ever since dealt in intrigues of all sorts, which latterly, you may be sure, have been chiefly political; and of both sorts I believe interest was generally the motive. Towards the end of the

² The Earl of Hertford, who employed Hume as secretary when Ambassador at Paris.

³ Matthew Maty (1718–1776), Principal Librarian of the British

Museum. According to *D. N. B.*, Chesterfield's *Memoirs* were completed by his son-in-law, who was named Justamond.

Duke of Choiseul's power, her house was the rendezvous of all his enemies. I have seen Madame de Mirepoix there with Marshal Richelieu, whom, till faction reunited them, she would never be in a room with (but at court), as he killed her first husband⁴. She married her nephew to Madame de Monconseil's daughter, and that made a quarrel between Madame de Mirepoix and the Prime Minister⁵, and was the true cause of his fall; for the Princess de Beauvau, her sister-in-law and enemy, to hurt Madame de Mirepoix, drove the Duchess de Grammont⁶ into all the violence against Madame du Barri, and the Duke was so weak as to let those two women embroil him with the mistress. I was an eye-witness of those scenes, and at the Duke's three or four nights in a week, and heard all their indiscretions.

There are I see besides, a letter or two to Madame de Tencin, a most horrid woman, sister of the Cardinal. She had great parts and so little principle, that she was supposed to have murdered and robbed one of her lovers, a scrape out of which Lord Harrington, another of them, saved her. She had levees from eight in the morning till night, from the lowest tools to the highest. Dalember was her natural son, Madame Geoffrin her pupil, and Pontdevesle her nephew, who was supposed to have only adopted her novels, the *Comte de Cominges*, and the *Mémoires de Philippe Auguste*. This acquaintance with the personages, English and French, makes me eager about these memoirs, and as I love nothing so much now as writing notes⁷ in my books, this will furnish me with employment.

I am extremely of your opinion about the new old poems. Indeed you talk *en connoissance de cause*: who can dispute with the author of the *Monody*? As I already have your

⁴ The Prince de Lixin.

⁵ The Duc de Choiseul.

⁶ Sister of the Duc de Choiseul.

⁷ Horace Walpole's own copy of

Chesterfield's *Memoirs*, with numerous notes in his handwriting, is in the British Museum.

Garden, I am less interested about its publication. I almost grudge the swine your pearls ; yet write the third and the fourth, and sometimes to me, for I must be encouraged, or I cannot write even newspapers. There is nothing pleases me so much as humbling myself to the level of my talents. Writing notes in my books (as it requires only truth and memory, and no parts) suits me exactly ; and had I always known myself as well as I do now, I should never have soared out of my sphere, and my works would have been highly valued, as I should have never had above one reader to each, the person who buys my books at my auction. Don't tell me you have nothing to say : you see how easy it is to make a long letter ; one might have written this in the Isle of Sky, but you are a poet and a tragic author, and will not condescend to write anything lest your letters should rise in judgement against you. It is a mercy to have no character to maintain. Your predecessor, Mr. Pope, laboured his letters as much as the *Essay on Man*, and as they were written to everybody, they do not look as if they had been written to anybody. However, as I expect to be indemnified for your silence, I will consent to send you three letters for one, provided you give me a satisfactory account hereafter of your having been better employed than in answering mine. I certainly shall do nothing better than writing to you, and therefore whenever I have anything worth telling you, you shall hear it ; and I shall not consider whether it is worth posterity's knowing or not. Posterity must deserve my favour a little better than their ancestors now living, or I shall not care a straw for their suffrage.

1756. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, March 28, 1777.

I HAVE been here these six days alone, enjoying the bounty of March, which has laid aside its old dry winds and behaved

with a warmth, a heat that June seldom condescends to bestow. I have had every door and window all day open for these three days, and in the garden the sun was even too hot. I wonder that in this pious age there is no fear of an earthquake, and that my Lord of London¹ has not threatened us with one in his pastoral letter on Good Friday!

I left the town in a buzz about Lord Pigot's arrest², in which the Scots are said to have acted an ungentle part; nay, one of guile, if they could be suspected of any unfair dealings. We have fancied that this little isle could hold both the East and the West *in commendam*, and supply the places of Montezuma and Aurengzebe. I doubt France will soon present to both those cures of souls. Caius Manlius Washingtonius Americanus, the dictator, has got together a large army, larger than that our ally the Duke of Wirtemberg was to have sold us, and General Howe, who has nothing but salt provisions in our metropolis, New York, has not twenty thousand pounds' worth of pickles as he had at Boston; but I do not understand military matters, and therefore will say no more of them. Have you read Hume's *Life*, and did you observe that he thought of retiring to France and changing his name, because his works had not got him a name? Lord Bute called himself Sir John Stuart in Italy to shroud the beams of a title too gorgeous; but it is new to conceal a name that nobody had heard of. Have you got Lord Chesterfield? I have read his letters and like them, but Dr. Maty is no *Mason* at biography. You will be charmed with his *Common Senses* and *Fogs*, if you never read them, and with his *Worlds*, which you have read. They are the best of his works. Mr. Jephson has sent me his *Vitellia*, which Garrick rejected last year, with as much judgement

LETTER 1756.—¹ Richard Terrick, Bishop of London; d. March 29, 1777.

² Lord Pigot, Governor of Madras,

arrested by some of the members of his Council, in consequence of a quarrel, and thrown into prison, where he died on May 11, 1777.

as he acted all the wretched pieces that appeared at Drury Lane for so many years. It has beautiful poetry as *Braganza* had, and more action and more opportunities for good actors, if there were any.

This is my second since my promise of three, of which I repent already, as I have no satisfaction in writing but to hear from you ; but I can make all three as short as I please, for the spirit and the letter of a promise are two very different things, vide Sanchez, Escobar³, Mansfield, and other casuists on coronation oaths.

There has been a young gentlewoman overturned and terribly bruised by her *Vulcanian stays*. They now wear a steel busk down their middle, and a rail of the same metal across their breasts. If a hero attempts to storm such strong lines, and comes to a close engagement, he must lie as ill at his ease as St. Lawrence on his gridiron.

1757. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, April 3, 1777.

I THANK you most gratefully, my dear Sir, for your kind letter of the eleventh of last month ; but I do assure you that I never had the most distant thought of endeavouring to recover what your late brother so indiscreetly appropriated to himself ; nor would I for fifty times the sum attack his children, who were ignorant of the transaction. I have not only friendship but obligations enough to your family, to bear some hard things from any one of it ; and though your late brother had often unkind thoughts of me, and treated me very often very harshly, yet I have too warm a temper myself not to pardon it in others—and besides, it is just to your brother to allow, that though he directed his

³ Thomas Sanchez (d. 1610) and Antonio Escobar (d. 1669), members of the order of Jesuits.

anger to me, who was not only innocent, but a joint sufferer with him, the losses he felt from the derangement of my father's and brother's affairs were sufficient to raise his bile—but let us say no more of all this: I am, as to my own particular, glad of having had an opportunity of showing my affection for your family—yet I shall give a farther proof of it and of my justice, which your late brother called in question, though, as he did it out of ill-temper, I was too proud to satisfy *him*.

I have nothing very new to tell you on public affairs, especially as I can know nothing more than you see in the papers. It is my opinion that the King's affairs are in a very bad position in America. I do not say that his armies may not gain advantages again; though I believe there has been as much design as cowardice in the behaviour of the provincials, who seem to have been apprised that protraction of the war would be more certainly advantageous to them than heroism. Washington, the dictator, has shown himself both a Fabius and a Camillus. His march through our lines is allowed a prodigy of generalship. In one word, I look upon a great part of America as lost to this country! It is not less deplorable, that, between art and contention, such an inveteracy has been sown between the two countries as will probably outlast even the war! Supposing this unnatural enmity should not soon involve us in other wars, which would be extraordinary indeed, what a difference, in a future war with France and Spain, to have the colonies in the opposite scale, instead of being in ours! What politicians are those who have preferred the empty name of *sovereignty* to that of *alliance*, and forced subsidies to the golden ocean of commerce!

Alas! the trade of America is not all we shall lose! The ocean of commerce wafted us wealth at the return of regular tides: but we had acquired an empire too, in whose plains

the beggars we sent out as labourers could reap sacks of gold in three or four harvests ; and who with their sickles and reaping-hooks have robbed and cut the throats of those who sowed the grain. These rapacious foragers have fallen together by the ears ; and our Indian affairs, I suppose, will soon be in as desperate a state as our American. Lord Pigot has been treacherously and violently imprisoned, and the Company here has voted his restoration. I know nothing of the merits of the cause on either side : I dare to say both are very blamable. I look only to the consequences, which I do not doubt will precipitate the loss of our acquisitions there ; the title to which I never admired, and the possession of which I always regarded as a transitory vision. If we could keep it, we should certainly plunder it, till the expense of maintaining would overbalance the returns ; and, though it has rendered a little more than the holy city of Jerusalem, I look on such distant conquests as more destructive than beneficial ; and, whether we are martyrs or banditti, whether we fight for the Holy Sepulchre or for lacks of rupees, I detest invasions of quiet kingdoms, both for their sakes and for our own ; and it is happy for the former, that the latter are never permanently benefited.

Though I have been drawn away from your letter by the subject of it and by political reflections, I must not forget to thank you for your solicitude and advice about my health : but pray be assured that I am sufficiently attentive to it, and never stay long here in wet weather, which experience has told me is prejudicial. I am sorry for it, but I know London agrees with me better than the country. The latter suits my age and inclination ; but my health is a more cogent reason, and governs me. I know my own constitution exactly, and have formed my way of life accordingly. No weather, nothing gives me cold ; because, for these nine and thirty years, I have hardened myself so, by braving all

weathers and taking no precautions against cold, that the extremest and most sudden changes do not affect me in that respect. Yet damp, without giving me cold, affects my nerves; and, the moment I feel it, I go to town. I am certainly better since my last fit of gout than ever I was after one: in short, perfectly well; that is, well enough for my age. In one word, I am very weak, but have no complaint; and as my constitution, frame, and health require no exercise, nothing but fatigue affects me: and therefore you, and all who are so good as to interest themselves about me and give advice, must excuse me if I take none. I am preached to about taking no care against catching cold, and am told I shall one day or other be caught—possibly: but I must die of something; and why should not what has done to sixty be right? My regimen and practice have been formed on experience and success. Perhaps a practice that has suited the weakest of frames would kill a Hercules. God forbid I should recommend it; for I never saw another human being that would not have died of my darings, especially in the gout. Yet I have always found benefit; because my nature is so feverish, that everything cold, inwardly or outwardly, suits me. Cold air and water are my specifics, and I shall die when I am not master enough of myself to employ them; or rather, as I said this winter, on comparing the iron texture of my inside with the debility of my outside, ‘I believe I shall have nothing but my inside left!’ *Therefore*, my dear Sir, my regard for you will last as long as there is an atom of me remaining.

1758. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, April 5, 1777.

YOUNG folks may fancy what they will of such antiques as I am, having no original pleasures, or only scraps and

ends ; Lord Holland was always whining on the miseries of old age ; now I can tell both the one and the other, that there are very cordial enjoyments, which only the old can have. I have just tasted two great raptures of the sort I mean,—but indeed they do not happen very often. The transports I allude to are living to see the *private* works, sentiments, and anecdotes of one's own time come to light. The two last folios of Lord Chesterfield delighted me upon that score, but there is still a fresher work of the same kind, and by far one of the most curious and authentic that ever was published. It is a history of many interesting parts of the latter end of Louis Quatorze, of the Regent, and of the late King of France, taken from an immense collection of state papers amassed by the two last Maréchaux de Noailles¹, furnished by the family, and though of dates so recent, and though published at Paris, written with a freedom and impartiality that are stupendous. I will give you an instance that is striking : one of the Maréchals congratulates Louis on the taking of Namur, and says it is a conquest that he alone could achieve. King William, says the author, took it with much more deserved applause two years afterwards. There are six duodecimos, pretty thick ; the first relates chiefly to the persecution of the Protestants on the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes ; is severe on the King, but unsatisfactory, because the Marshal being recalled, the author follows him and not the war ; and this is almost the only kind of fault I find in the work, which ought to have been called *Memoirs of the two marshals*, instead of *Memoirs of two reigns*. But the invaluable part, and that pretty perfect, is the genuine and secret history of Spain on the establishment of Philip V.

LETTER 1758.—¹ Anne Jules (1650–1708), Duc de Noailles, and Adrien Maurice (1678–1766), Duc de Noailles,

his son and successor. The *Mémoires* were edited by the Abbé Millot (1726–1785).

Nothing ever was more curious—you will even see the pains Louis XIV took to persuade his grandson to give up Spain and content himself with Sardinia, and you cannot doubt it. The two last volumes are not less interesting to me, who have the very minute of time before my eyes. I remember how I trembled, as Lord Chesterfield did (for these Memoirs are the counterpart of his) just before the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, and yet you will see that the court of France was in as great a panic as we had reason to be. I remember saying often, that a little thing saved us as ruined us, and that if France had not as incapable ministers as we had, we must be undone. Perhaps, when more Memoirs of the family of Noailles appear, somebody or other will make this reflection again.

The second Marshal had (luckily for posterity, though probably a little wearisome at the time) a rage of drawing up memorials; but he was a good and a prudent man; and the latter quality made his courage a little doubted, as the author fairly owns. I remember a *bon mot* of his son, the present Marshal, on that topic. The old gentleman had like to have been drowned by going in a boat on the water; his son, the Duc d'Ayen, a great *bon motist*, scolded the servants for not hindering his father, and said, 'Ne scavez-vous pas que mon père craint l'eau comme le feu?'

You cannot conceive the avidity with which I devoured these volumes; one cannot be more vigorous at eighteen, but alas! one cannot go to Drury Lane and pick up two Noailles's every night! It is vexatious too, that as these papers will spread the taste of hoarding state papers (which the old Marshal had retained from the taste of memoir-writing that was rife in his youth), I shall not live to see those collections. We are indeed likely to have an immense collection ere long, but not quite so important. It seems by a note of Dr. Maty, that Lord Chesterfield—who I thought

had used him only as a butt to shoot wit at—had kept up a correspondence with *Long* Sir Thomas Robinson for fifty years. Well, Sir Thomas is dead too; and lest the public should sigh for his answers, as they did for Madame de Grignan's, he was so industrious as to keep copies of his; nay, he had preserved every letter he ever received; nay, and he had kept copies of all his answers to all them too; and he has left all (letters and answers) to the Roman people; that is, to an apothecary who married his natural daughter, with injunctions to publish all,—which will last me my life. Oh, but stay, the Primate of Ireland, Sir Thomas's brother, is not quite so indulgent as the house of Noailles, who have suffered a letter of a bishop, their uncle, who teases the Marshal for promotion, to be published. My Lord of Armagh is consulting lawyers whether he cannot stop the publication, and in truth it is an abominable thing that private letters of living persons should be printed.

I do not know a tittle of what has happened in Europe (or America) since Lord Chesterfield and Monsieur de Noailles died, but I shall go to town on Monday, recollect the living, and tell you what they have been doing; but then you must take care to answer this, which is *the third*, or if Lord Temple should find a plot in a meal-tub or a flower-pot, I shall not be able to tell you till I am empowered to write a first letter.

8th, Lond.

The Bishop of London is dead, and Mlle. Khrome. I thought your friend Dr. Hurd would have succeeded them both. The message² for the debts and civil list is to be delivered to-morrow. Somebody knocks, and I must finish.

² A message from the King, asking for the payment of his debts and an increase of his revenue.

1759. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

April 18, 1777.

I HAVE *seen* but not read one syllable of Marmontel's *Yncas*, nor ever will. History is romance enough, without purposely perverting it. I could not wade through a quarter of his *Belisarius*. I hope the Peruvians will have better masters to teach them liberty than French *philosophes*, and not be obliged to go to Paris on their way to Thermopylæ. However, as you can strike fire from a flint, I am disposed to send you the book, and shall be delighted if you beget a Pandora on a cloud.

It is easy to me to believe your friend's discoveries in encaustic. Müntz went far enough to prove the facility, use, and durability, but not far enough to get the method adopted ; not from any defect or difficulty in the practice, but from the stupidity and obstinacy and John-Trot-plodding-in-the-same-wayness of the professors. If you think, because it talks more of the arts, that the age is grown more sensible and docile, I shall not agree with you. In truth I have made up my mind in a superb contempt of everything present, not because I am old and prefer the days of my youth : I go much further back. Except yours, which can produce adamants that will resist time and live to be dug up in a brighter century, I am for totally discouraging genius. The soil in which it could shoot and flourish vigorously is worn out—at least in this island. It is a reprobated land in every sense, and if I were twenty years younger, I would seek a wiser country ; for there is a joy in looking up to great men and admiring them ; there is none to a generous mind in looking down on anybody, much less on all and without any of the pride of virtue. I trust one may, without vanity, despise a world that respects nothing but gold, whether to

hoard or squander. The contempt of money is no more a virtue than to wash one's hands is one; but one does not willingly shake hands with a man that never washes his.

Lord Chesterfield's *Characters* are published, and are not even prettily written, as might have been expected. They are not so much as terse and quaint, which would not indeed have made them better, but they are even vulgar and ill-expressed: one would think he did not know the personages well with whom he had been so conversant. This is not from prejudice that I speak, for my father's is tolerably impartial, and in some parts just, yet as it was preserved by his Lordship, so many years after the confutation was notorious, it shows old prejudice to tax him with having sacrificed everything to the purpose of making a great fortune. He was born to 2,500*l.* a year, left a nominal estate of 8,000*l.*, and died 50,000*l.* in debt. Tom Windham was more ingenuous, even though in opposition, and in the height of the clamour. Going to see Longleat, built by Sir John Thynne, steward to the Protector Somerset, and the man who showed the house (which by the way is a town in comparison) saying, 'It is a large house, but we don't pretend that it rivals Houghton,' Windham replied, 'No; yet I believe Mr. Jenkins (my father's steward) has not built such an one.' The character of the Queen¹ is equally unjust: avarice was by no means her failing. Lord Hardwicke is as ridiculously exalted. More, Bacon, Clarendon, were nothing to that mirror of magistrates; you would think that Lord Chatham could have out-reasoned Lord Mansfield, as easily as his thunder shook that aspen leaf. I do not recommend to your friend to copy these portraits in encaustic.

There is another scurrilous poem by the author of the

LETTER 1759.—¹ Queen Caroline, wife of George II. Lord Chesterfield

wrote of her that she 'loved money, but could occasionally part with it.'

Diaboliad. It is particularly hurled at the heads of the Hertfords. The writer is supposed to be a Captain Coombes², whose title to the office of censor-general is having been guilty of forgery; and to be executioner, to having married a common woman, who was kept by Lord Beauchamp, . . .³ Are not we an exemplary people?

The payment of the King's debts was gratefully accorded yesterday by those who had contributed to cause his necessities. Charles Fox made a great figure in behalf of Lord John's⁴ motion for a committee. The latter apologized for the secession of his friends, on their finding they could do no good. Wilkes made a panegyric on the real King of France for his tenderness to his brothers, unlike the gloomy tyrant—and then he paused—Louis XI. In the Lords, Lord Rockingham and the Duke of Grafton differed on one motion, and agreed on another. I know nothing of the Budget, but I am charmed with a new mode of government, which everybody else laughs at; I mean the decision of the Directors of the East India Company, by tossing up heads and tails, whether Lord Pigot should be a prisoner or a nabob. If every nation was to be ruled by this compendious and impartial method, the people would on every occasion have an equal chance for happiness from every measure; and I beg to know where it is not three to one against them by every other mode. I would be content to live under the most despotic monarchy that could be devised, provided King Heads-and-Tails were the sovereign.

You wonder I say nothing on your second *Garden*. No, you don't. It is not upon any of the topics of the week, and the silent few that read from taste come seldom in my way, who live half the week stark alone at Strawberry, and

² William Combe (1741–1823), who afterwards wrote *Dr. Syntax's Tours*. A different story of his marriage is related in *D.N.B.*

³ Passage omitted.

⁴ Lord John Cavendish.

the rest of it with folks whose reading is the last thing I desire to hear them talk of; yet they do talk of it, for it is the *Morning Post*. Lord Nuneham indeed told me to-night that a Lord of his acquaintance had taken your *Garden* for Gray's and did not like it. We were both very glad of both, and I am sure you agree with us. Adieu!

1760. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Barton Mills, April 28, 1777.

I do not know whether Mr. Sharpe has yet complied with my request, and acquainted Lady Orford with the return of her son's insanity. I chose that method of informing her Ladyship not to oblige her to renew a correspondence with me, which she dropped the moment I sent her a letter in which I asked no favour for myself, but gave her an opportunity of obliging the single friend¹ of her son that had shown gratitude to him, when he was deemed no longer capable of serving anybody. I should have desired you, my dear Sir, rather than Mr. Sharpe to make this melancholy notification, if experience had not taught me that Lady O. has Spartan fortitude enough to support her son's calamity with unshaken nerves.

Yes, after an interval of three years, in which my nephew remained as much in his senses as he was *supposed* to be before his declared frenzy, he was seized a fortnight ago with a fever which soon brought out the colour of his blood. In two days he was furious. The low wretches by whom in his *sensible* hours he has always been surrounded, concealed the symptoms till they were terrifying. I received no notice till the sixth day, and then—by the stage-coach! I set out directly for the hovel where he is—a *pasnidge*-

house, as the reverend proprietor² called it to me, on the edge of the fens, which my Lord hires, and is his usual residence. The single chamber without a bed is a parlour seven feet high, directly under my Lord's bedchamber, without shutters, and so smoky that there is no sitting in it unless the door is open. I am forced to lie here, five miles off, in an inn—a palace to *his* dwelling. The morning after my arrival, a physician I had sent for from Norwich, forty miles from hence, coming down to tell me how he had found my Lord, we were alarmed with a scream and a bustle. The doctor had ordered the window to be opened to let out the smoke, and, the moment he had quitted his patient, my Lord attempted to fling himself out of the window, but was prevented by his keeper and servants, who flung him on the bed. You will scarcely believe that, on my arrival, his mistress, his steward, and a neighbouring parson of the confederacy, on my declaring I should remove him directly to London for proper assistance, cried out, that I should kill him if I conveyed him from that Paradise in which was all his delight, and where he has so long swallowed every apple that every serpent has offered to him. The very day before he had asked where he was.

At the desire of the Norwich physician, I sent for Dr. Jebb from London. Before he came, the fever was gone, and an interval of sense was returned. Yet, as before, he would only speak in a whisper, and could not be persuaded to show his tongue to Dr. Jebb, though he made rational answers. Dr. Jebb pronounced that he had neither fever nor understanding. He has had a slight return of

² One Ball, minister of Eriswell, a jockey-parson. He having taken his doctor's degree in an interval of his correspondence with Mr. Walpole on Lord Orford's transactions about the parsonage-house, and Mr. Walpole directing his letter to him,

ignorant of his titular advancement, 'To Mr. Ball,' the man in his answer was so absurd as to add a postscript in these words, 'Dr. Ball, if you please, the next time you favour me.' Walpole.

the former, and no delirium. Yet both his physicians, the apothecary, and even his mistress, think his disorder will still last some weeks. Perhaps it may not; nor is it the worst consideration that he will have these relapses: as this arrived in very cold weather, and from no apparent cause, the madness is evidently constitutional, and leaves both himself and his family with all their apprehensions. Mine are, that as both now and formerly he has betrayed mischievous designs, he will after some lucid interval destroy himself; and I have seen that the crew about him will not call in help till perhaps too late. They had not even sent for a physician; because, as they told me, my Lord (a lunatic) has no opinion of physicians. Judge of my distress! My brother³ and I have too much tenderness and delicacy to take out the statute of lunacy. All my care and attention to him, his mistress, and fortune, in his former illness, have not made the smallest impression. I have not even seen him these three years, though he declared on his recovery that he approved all I had done; and I must say that I meant to set an example of tenderness which, I believe, was never seen before in a parallel case. I cannot resent it from him; for his misfortune acquits him of everything. I had greatly improved his fortune, and should have effected much more, had he not instantly taken everything out of my hands.

This treatment, and many such reasons, had determined me never more to meddle with his affairs: indeed, the fatigue, joined to my apprehension, had half killed me. I had done everything at my own risk, and some things at my own cost. Thus, without the sanction of law, which I will not claim for my Lord's sake, I could not undertake his affairs again. I now declared I would take on me the care of his person and health, but never of his fortune—

³ Sir Edward Walpole.

what will become of that, I know not! My own peace, at the end of my life, and broken as I am, must weigh something. I have, from the instant my Lord came of age, laboured to serve him—in vain. I have struggled hard to rescue and restore my family; a proud view, perhaps, yet as reasonable as most we have! Vision for vision, that insubstantial and transitory one, called philosophy, that is, indifference, is, I suppose, the best. What are distant views in this world? To be realized when we are past knowing it. How idle are hopes about futurity, whether about our family or our country; and how little different in duration and extent, when compared with the succession of ages! If we hope our name and race, or if, on a grander scale, we wish the constitution of our country may last, are not those lofty views confined to two or three hundred years, which are but a moment in the revolution of endless centuries? The moment we step beyond the diminutive sphere of our familiar ideas, all is boundless and lost in immensity!—I descend to earth, to me and my little concerns.

I shall stay here to see the physician from Norwich to-morrow. If he pronounces, as I expect, that my Lord is recovered, I shall take my leave, and resign him to the rudder of his own poor brain. I pity him, but it must be so. My character and Sir Edward's are at stake, and to preserve them we must obey the law literally. The last time, the moment the physicians pronounced him sane, we submitted and threw open his doors; though neither of us were of that opinion. I attended him to Houghton, and saw nothing but evidence of distraction. The gentlemen of the country came to congratulate his recovery; yet, for more than six weeks, he would do nothing but speak in the lowest voice, and would whisper to them at the length of the table, when the person next to him could not distinguish what he said. Every evening, precisely at the

same hour, sitting round a table, he would join his forehead to his mistress's (who is forty, red-faced, and with black teeth, and with whom he has slept every night these twenty years), and there they would sit for a quarter of an hour, like two paroquets, without speaking. Every night, from seven to nine, he regularly, for the whole fortnight, made his secretary of militia, an old drunken, broken tradesman, read Statius to the whole company, though the man could not hiccup the right quantity of the syllables. Imagine what I suffered! One morning I asked the company, before my Lord was up, how they found him? They answered, just as he had always been. Then, thought I, he has always been distracted.

Forgive my tiring you with these details! They have rushed into my memory again, and I cannot help venting them. I must expel them once more; though every sudden knock at my door at an unusual hour will terrify me, as it did for thirteen months three years ago. I have gone the round of all my thoughts, and can rest on no plan. Were families to have more power, it would be abused; and, as the law has fixed the criterions of sense, no private man for the best purposes must, can, control it. I have done all I can; which is, to warn my Lord's dependants of the danger of concealing the first symptoms of his infirmity; and have endeavoured to alarm them, for their own sakes, with the risk of his not observing rigid temperance. Their interest in his health must combat their interest in flattering him. Adieu!

Arlington Street, May 2.

The Norwich physician said he found my Lord so much better, that I left him two days ago; though his mistress desired I would leave the keeper, at least for a month. Thus his life will be safe. On cool reflection my plan is settled. On the first notice of any relapse, I shall refuse to

go to him ; declaring that if his people will bring him to town, I will be answerable for his safety ; but that I will not, if they keep him in the country far from all help and proper attendance. In that case, they that detain him shall be responsible. This, I trust, will alarm them, and preserve him ; I can conceive nothing better.

1761. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, May 2, 1777.

I ASK Mr. Fraser to send you the *Incas* ; I wish they may produce a thousandfold.

You must not expect news nor anything from me. I have been again involved in a sea of troubles : my nephew Lord Orford is relapsed, and I have passed the last ten days between the inn at Barton Mills¹, and the hovel where he is five miles thence. He is so far come to himself, that when he will speak, which is only in a whisper, his answers are rational. I will not tire you with the variety of my distresses, which are manifold ; doctors, lawyers, stewards, rogues and relations, take up my whole time. I stole one day to walk through² [Cambridge] and dine with old Cole ; I sighed to take the vows at the former. I think I could pass my last days there with great comfort. King's Chapel is more beautiful than Strawberry Hill. A bookish monk is a happy being ; he is neither disposed to laugh, nor to feel, and scarce knows that the other two divisions are fools and villains. Adieu !

LETTER 1761.—¹ Near Mildenhall, in Suffolk.

² The word ' Cambridge ' was evidently omitted here.

1762. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, May 14, 1777.

YOUR last has given me both pain and pleasure. I know the gout too well not to suffer for you; though when it begins but late in life it is never very violent, and certainly is very wholesome discipline. It is ten times worse to have ceremony and princes to struggle with at such a moment; and I tremble lest your efforts against an enemy that will not bear an instant of contradiction, should have redoubled your torment. Oh, death itself does not regard princes less than the gout does. Then, on the other hand, I am charmed with the Duke's¹ condescension; and the more, as he will have witnessed your disability. I am sure, in some ministers, he might with reason have suspected your confinement was political.

You do not owe to me, I assure you, the Duchess's graciousness. I did not even imagine they would pass through Florence. She has not at all forgotten that she was not royally born, and her good nature and familiarity are not expelled by dignity. I am sure you found her as easy and natural as if she had not married even Lord Waldegrave. When she left England, her beauty had lost no more than her good qualities. I am glad your court has behaved as they ought. I am glad the English see there is no nation so contemptibly servile as our own. Europe, that has hated our *fierté*, is reaping revenge fast. Our western sun is setting, and dark clouds hang over our east. France and Spain have spoken pretty intelligibly. The former offered us for themselves, and for the latter, a naval disarmament. We jumped at it; and France coldly answered, Spain would not come into it. So a war

LETTER 1762. —¹ The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were then at Florence. *Walpole*.

is sure, whenever they think us enough undone to be totally ruined. I believe a younger minister than Monsieur de Maurepas would think so at present.

My own distress continues, and by fits I suppose will last for my life. My nephew seemed calmer, but is again unruly and sullen. I have got him within twelve miles of London, so that his person will be safe. As to his affairs, I have peremptorily refused to meddle with them. I will not see all my webs unravelled every six months. I check myself on this subject, because I am too full of it not to be apt to talk too much on it when once tapped.

I rejoice you have got your nephew again, and Lady Lucy, and that she is so much better than you expected. I trust Lord Orford's agreement with his grandfather's creditors, which he had just signed, is good. The law will probably think so. In my private opinion, he has been mad these twenty years and more. On his coming of age, I obtained a fortune of one hundred and fifty-two thousand pounds for him: he would not look at her². Had I remained charged with his affairs six months longer on his last illness, he would have been five thousand a year richer than the day he fell ill. My reward was, not to see him for three years. But I see I cannot help talking of this. I had twice expunged all thoughts of Houghton and my family from my memory. They are forced on me again when I can do no good. Well, it was not my plan of old age to pass my time with princes or madmen! Mine has been a chequered life of very various scenes! But it has taught me some temper, which I was not born with; and the best of all lessons, to do right, because others do wrong. It is not enough to be indignant, if one does not mend oneself. I had much to mend, and corrections made in age have very little grace. One seldom conquers one's passions till

² Miss Nicol, afterwards Marchioness of Carnarvon.

time has delivered them up bound hand and foot. Therefore I have very little esteem for my own philosophy. It is at most but solicitude to make a decent exit, and applying to one's character what Pope makes an expiring beauty say of her face—

One would not sure be frightful when one's dead!

Alas! we are ridiculous animals. Folly and gravity equally hunt shadows. The deepest politician toils but for a momentary rattle. There is nothing worth wishing for but the smile of conscious innocence; and that consciousness would make the smile of age more beautiful than even the lovely infant's simplicity. I possess no such jewel: but one may admire a diamond, though one cannot obtain it. You see how my nephew throws my mind into a moral train, which is naturally more gay; and my wisdom commonly prefers accepting the vision life as a something, to analysing it. But one is the creature of the hour, and this happens to be a serious one. Adieu!

May 15.

I have received your long letter, and thank you for it most particularly; especially for one part, which you may guess by my not mentioning. But you was so pleased with the Duchess's manner, that you forgot her beauty; which I thought would strike you. The little Princess³ is a dear soul, and I do not intend to be inconstant and prefer her brother⁴; nor do I think the Duke will.

We have no news. France has imprisoned the crew of a privateer that took one of our packet-boats, and carried it into Dunkirk. She is determined to draw us on farther on the hook, and we dare not seem to suspect that hook. I believe America gone past hope, unless we can recover

³ Princess Sophia Matilda of Gloucester.

⁴ Prince William Frederick of Gloucester.

it with half the number that was not sufficient last year. Adieu! I shall be impatient to hear you are recovered. Your new Prince of Nassau⁵ is perfectly ridiculous—a real peer of England to tumble down to a tinsel titularity! Indeed, an English coronet will not be quite so weighty as it was!

1763. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

May 16.

As a Goth, as a respecer of princes of the name of William, and as uncle of one of that name¹, I certainly shall not refuse my mite to the re-enshrinement of the bones of poor William of Hatfield. I will willingly be at the whole expense, if you will take care I shall have no honour from it, as I hate crowding one's name into Fame's account-book, by bringing her in a bill for stone and mortar. You shall have his Royal Highness's arms too, and anything but the epitaph. I have neither time nor understanding left for writing anything. My nephew's situation will employ and poison all my leisure; and were it not my way to occupy every minute, I could not go through half I have to do, and all I wish to do I leave undone. If I forget Prince William's arms, you must put me in mind.

In all my trouble I cannot be forgetful of you. Here is come out a paltry *Supplement* to Hume's *Life*, with his will, a supplement to his vanity. He modestly orders only his name to be mentioned on his tomb, but appoints posterity his executors, and requires them to write an epitaph setting forth his great abilities according to the high opinion they will have of them. *Voilà un philosophe*. The editor grossly

⁵ Earl Cowper had obtained a titular principality from the Emperor, imagining that he should take place of English dukes; but finding his mistake, and that it would give him no precedence at all here, he

dropped the title of Prince. *Walpole*.

LETTER 1763. — Hitherto placed amongst letters of 1778. (See *Notes and Queries*, Dec. 31, 1898.)

¹ The Duke of Gloucester.

abuses you for what I hope you glory in, the publication of Gray's letters; in particular that which censures Hume, which the fool calls illiberal. By Hume's own account of himself he attacked all religion, in order to be talked of. It is *illiberal* in a very moral man to be shocked at atheism! This is Scotch morality! The condemnation of Gray's letters is Scotch taste! The whole nation hitherto has been void of wit and humour, and even incapable of relishing it. The dull editor says Gray never thought his letters would see the light. He does not perceive how much that circumstance enhances their merit: I do not wonder he is insensible of their charming beauties. Nobody yet ever wrote letters so well, and his earliest have more marks of genius than his latest. Your crime does not lie in what you have given of Gray, but of yourself. The Scots like to wound with another man's dagger: you will only smile at their impotence. I wish they could only stab with their pens,—

The grey-goose quill that is thereon,
In no man's blood will be wet.

I know no news. You have seen the Speaker's remonstrance², and how ably Charles Fox made the House adopt it, and consequently the condemnation of their own act.

I have seen Sheridan's new comedy³, and liked it much better than any I have seen since *The Provoked Husband*. There is a great deal of wit and good situations, but it is too long, has two or three bad scenes that might easily be omitted, and seemed to me to want nature and truth of character; but I have not read it, and sat too high to hear it well. It is admirably acted. Burke has published

² Rigby commented on some remarks made by the Speaker in presenting the Civil List Bill to the King. The Speaker complained to the House of Rigby's attack. 'Charles Fox proposed words in justification

of the Speaker which were agreed to without a division,' and Rigby apologized. (*Last Journals*, vol. ii. pp. 115, 116.)

³ *The School for Scandal*, produced on May 8, 1777.

a pamphlet on the American War, and an apology for his own secession and that of his friends⁴. I have not had time to look at it, but I do not believe I shall agree with him on the latter part so much as on the first. Do not return me the *Incas*; I shall never read it. I hear your *Garden* was criticized in the *Morning Post*. Continue to plant

Flowers worthy of paradise,—

and do not mind their being trampled on in such a soil as this. Adieu! I wish I had leisure to chat with you longer.

1764. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, May 22, 1777.

IT is not owing to forgetfulness, negligence, or idleness, to none of which I am subject, that you have not heard from me since I saw you, dear Sir, but to my miserable occupation with my poor nephew, who engrosses my whole attention, and will, I doubt, destroy my health, if he does not recover his. I have got him within fourteen miles of town with difficulty. He is rather worse than better, may recover in an instant, as he did last time, or remain in his present sullenness. I am far from expecting he should ever be perfectly in his senses, which, in my opinion, he scarce ever was. His intervals expose him to the worst people, his relapses overwhelm me.

I have put together some trifles I promised you, and will beg Mr. Lort to be the bearer when he goes to Cambridge, if I know of it. At present I have time for nothing I like. My age and inclination call for retirement: I envied your happy hermitage, and leisure to follow your inclination. I have always *lived post*, and shall now die before I can bait—yet it is not my wish to be unemployed, could I but

⁴The Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

choose my occupations. I wish I could think of the pictures you mention, or had had time to see Dr. Glynn and the Master of Emmanuel¹. I doat on Cambridge, and could like to be often there—the beauty of King's College Chapel, now it is restored, penetrated me with a visionary longing to be a monk in it—though my life has been passed in turbulent scenes, in pleasures—or rather pastimes, and in much fashionable dissipation, still books, antiquity, and *virtù* kept hold of a corner of my heart, and since necessity has forced me of late years to be a man of business, my disposition tends to be a recluse for what remains—but it will not be my lot, and though there is some excuse for the young doing what they like, I doubt an old man should do nothing but what he ought; and I hope doing one's duty is the best preparation for death. Sitting with one's arms folded to think about it, is a very lazy way of preparing for it. If Charles V had resolved to make some amends for his abominable ambition by doing good, his duty as a King, there would have been infinitely more merit than going to doze in a convent. One may avoid active guilt in a sequestered life, but the virtue of it is merely negative, though innocence is beautiful.

I approve much of your corrections on Sir J. Hawkins, and send them to the magazine.

I want the exact blazon of William of Hatfield his arms,—I mean the Prince buried at York. Mr. Mason and I are going to restore his monument, and I have not time to look for them. I know you will be so good as to assist

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

1765. TO SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

Arlington Street, May 23, 1777.

LAST Monday I found on my table a curious case of tortoise-shell studded with silver, with an anonymous note telling me it had belonged to Van Trump¹. My stupid footboy could not recollect the name of the sender. I was going to advertise for my benefactor, and have made such a rout with my gratitude, that at last the housemaid recollected the footman had told her it was Sir William Hamilton: you know, dear Sir, how many reasons I have for believing her; Strawberry Hill is filled—with your presents, and if they could speak, would be with my gratitude. Your name is in every page of my catalogue, which is some proof of what I say—but as gratitude without shame is but an honest whore that vows she will take money, I beg that if you deserve to sit for Liberality, I may have some claim to be drawn for Modesty, and therefore I do beg you will never give me anything more, as I could not be more ashamed, nor more than I am

Your most obliged

Humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1766. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

May 28, 1777.

I HAVE but time for a word, Mr. Lort has just been here, and does not return to Cambridge this month, he has

LETTER 1765.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Messrs. Ellis & Elvey, New Bond Street, W.

¹ In the *Description of Strawberry Hill* Horace Walpole states that the

case was that in which Van Tromp used to take his pipe to sea.

LETTER 1766.—Not in C.; printed in the 4to (1818) ed. of the letters to Cole; now printed from original in British Museum.

advised me to send the box by the waggon; and it goes to-morrow by Burley's from the Bull. It is a large box, and yet contains very little, and less worth sending you; but the glass required bran, which makes the bulk. I found most of the pieces I bought at Mr. Ives's had suffered so much, by being brought to London and carried to Twickenham, that they were too broken to offer you. You will find indeed but one good piece, that in this shape . The strange old ivory carving was given to me by the Dowager Duchess of Aiguillon. There are a few proofs of views of Strawberry; but some time or other you shall have a new and complete set. There is Strawberry's pedigree too; but I can find no print of Ganganelli¹. I am ashamed so large a box should contain only such rubbish. Adieu.

1767. TO JOHN ROBINSON.

SIR,

My deputy, Mr. Bedford, has acquainted me that you are desirous of knowing the prices I pay for the several articles with which, as Usher of the Exchequer, I supply the Treasury; and he told me that you added that Lord North has a mind to make new regulations that may be economic for the public. I have accordingly, Sir, ordered Mr. Bedford to give you the most exact information on every particular. He told me too that Lord North would be so just as, I do not doubt, to make compensations to anybody that should suffer by such alterations. Give me leave, Sir, to say that it is not on that ground that I now trouble you. On the contrary it is to beg you will be so good as to acquaint Lord North, that he may not only command any information from me on that subject, as far as I myself am con-

¹ Probably Pope Clement XIV, whose family name was Ganganelli. from 4to ed. of Lord Orford's *Works* (1798), vol. ii. p. 386.
LETTER 1767.—Not in C.; reprinted

cerned, and which it is my duty to give, but that I shall cheerfully acquiesce in whatever new regulations he shall be pleased to make for the benefit of the public. No rights or interest of mine shall stand in the way of so good a purpose; and when I use the word *rights*, it is not to support but to waive them for any national benefit. I have received too great benefits and too long from the crown and the public, not to owe any facility in my power, as far as so inconsiderable a person can do it, to ease the burdens of both, and I shall with great willingness accept whatever shall be thought proper for me on any new plan of public economy. I should think myself of too little consequence to say this, were it not that the example of the most private man may be of use on such an occasion. I am, Sir, with great regard,

Your obedient humble servant,

Arlington Street, June 9, 1777.

HORACE WALPOLE.

1768. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 10, 1777.

I DIRECT this to Ampthill, concluding from your unwillingness to leave it, Madam, that your stay at Warwick Castle will be short. You must be charmed with it; I think awed; at least, my Gothic superstition sees every tower haunted with Beauchamps, and I could not sleep there without dreaming of Queen Elizabeth in all her pomps and pageantries. Then the chapel in the church! I beg the possessor's pardon, but I set very little store by Sir Fulke Greville. Oh, but in the castle is a portrait of my hero, Lord Brook of the Civil War; and another of Lady Catherine Grey¹ and her son, and of Lady Sandwich², who

LETTER 1768.—¹ Daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, and sister of Lady Jane Grey; m. (1) Lord Herbert; (2)

Earl of Hertford; d. 1568.

² Elizabeth Wilmot, Countess of Sandwich, daughter of the Earl of

was no great hero of mine, no more than Lord Rochester and his monkey. Did you go to Guy's Cliff, and see how Lady Mary Greathead³ has painted it straw-colour, and stuck cockle-shells in its hair? There was a wise Mr. Wise too, who lived at the Priory, who was very angry with me for asking if he had *planted* much, not knowing that he was the son of London and Wise the gardeners. Does not Miss Vernon think it would have been more historic to have drawn her accompanying Earl Guy when he slew the dun cow, than St. George killing the dragon⁴, which is not a quarter so true?

Your Ladyship's panegyric on the fine weather, if you will allow me to pun, came a day after the *fair*. June has relapsed into winter, if not to its usual rains. I found every soul in London sitting by the fire, and talking over fifteen matches, and as many promotions. Mrs. Howe was the only person that wanted no extraneous heat. Two nights ago, she said, if Lord North had *promised* the Treasury to Lord Westcote, he certainly would not have it. Entered Mr. Keene. She asked him if it was the way of the administration to affront those they employed! He was mute. 'You may think what you please, Sir,' continued she, 'but I tell you, this is irreconcilable.' Governor Tryon⁵ has burnt a magazine, but had great difficulty to retreat without losing all his men. Washington, they say, has laid the whole country waste. I am an old piece of wisdom, and you must bear with me. I doubt your Ladyship's dislike of quitting Ampthill proceeds a little from your aversion to appearing in public; but do you know you must surmount this, nay entirely. Will you like, when your daughters are

Rochester, whose portrait at Warwick Castle represents him crowning his monkey with laurel.

³ Lady Mary Bertie (d. 1774), eldest daughter of second Duke of Ancaster; m. (1748) Samuel Greathed, of Guy's

Cliff.

⁴ Referring to Sir Joshua Reynolds' picture.

⁵ William Tryon (1725-1788), Governor of New York.

to go about, to trust them to chaperons? The longer you are a recluse, the more uneasy it will be to break through a habit. You feel Lady Georgiana's⁶ want of you, and therefore must be educating yourself to produce Lady Anne. There is no pleasure in being anybody's friend, if one is not to tell them disagreeable truths; nor any comfort in growing old, if one may not be cross and preach. Our two resources, both charmingly ill-natured, are to foretell, and to blame. I make use of the first privilege, for fear of not living to enjoy the second. I have a little revenge in it too, for you *will* commend me, though I have no merit but having lived till I am fit for nothing but doing right.

The kingdom of France does not dine with me till *next* Saturday: it will ruin me, but I try to make friends amongst them, that they may not burn poor Strawberry when they invade us. In the meantime, I am a great prince. As regent to my nephew, I issued my writ to his falconer this morning, to deliver his thanks to — Thornton, Esq., during the interregnum. I have declined the superintendence of the finances, and have only taken charge of the *menus plaisirs*. Alas! I try to smile, but my gaiety is forced. I have no time to do anything I like, and must now go and write to Charles Boone about a gentleman that is to reside with and have the care of my nephew, who is calm and does not alarm me, but they say the more likely to continue as he is.

1769. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, June 10, 1777.

If you wonder you have not heard from me *voici pour quoi*: I might plead business, but though I have enough,

⁶ Lady Georgiana Fitzroy (afterwards Smyth), daughter of Lady Ossory by her first marriage.

LETTER 1769.—Misplaced by C. amongst letters of 1778. (See *Notes and Queries*, July 23, 1898.)

that was not the impediment. The true reason why I have not written was, because I have. I wrote to you above a week ago, intending Mr. Montagu should be the bearer, and gave it to Mr. Stonhewer, but, lo! his friend was set out, and the former returned my epistle to me. As the news it contained would be still-born, instead of being so lazy as to send it, I begin anew.

You now know all the history of your warlike metropolitan, Archbishop Turpin¹. I hope he made his entrance into his capital by beat of drum. If he attains what he deserves, and perhaps ambitions, a red hat, I shall beg to present him with that of his predecessor, Wolsey, out of my own museum; but I hope he will never be able to say with that son of a butcher, and with equal foundation from his pulpit, *Ego et Rex meus*. My brother, who is no American, is exceedingly scandalized at this champion of high Church. This vulture has been so plumed in both his flights, that I fancy his successor will learn to mix the prudence of the serpent with the timidity of the dove, and creep on his belly instead of soaring.

Your adversary Murray² is a blackguard. You may bear to have filth thrown at you, when it is at the Duchess of Devonshire and at the youngest and handsomest women in town. It is a polished, sweet-tempered age.

What care you about all the new promotions? or what cares anybody but the promoted and the disappointed? One of the latter, Lord Howe, is the only one worth naming.

¹ Dr. Markham, Archbishop of York. Horace Walpole refers to his violent speech in the House of Lords on May 30, 1777, in reply to the Duke of Grafton and Lord Shelburne. These lords had commented severely on the despotic principles expressed in a sermon of Markham's, preached before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel on Feb. 21, 1777.

² A Scotch bookseller who had pirated some of Gray's poems, and against whom Mason had commenced a Chancery suit. Murray published *A Letter to W. Mason, M.A., Precentor of York, concerning his Edition of Mr. Gray's Poems, and the Practices of Booksellers. By a Bookseller.*

He expected to be Treasurer of the Navy, because the appointments of Commanders-in-Chief and Ambassadors are not sufficient to content that family. Their sister³ declares the quarrel is irreconcilable—it is a disinterested age.

I send you six *Gazettes Littéraires*: you needed not to celebrate the conveyance. Mr. S.⁴ and I do not reckon you the pink of discretion.

I have almost finished the first volume of Dr. Robertson⁵. The materials are well put together, and it is a book that must please anybody to whom the matter is new. In short, it is not all so, and though the arrangement is good, I see no genius, no shrewdness, none of that penetration that shone in the *History of Scotland*, and totally left him in his *Charles V.* Two expressions have shocked me. Speaking of that indefatigable good man Las Casas⁶, who laboured to rescue the poor Americans from the tyranny of their conquerors, the Doctor calls it a *bustling* activity, and says he was ashamed to show his face after the fatal termination of his *splendid* schemes. What epithets for so humane a design! Could Archbishop Markham, in a sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel by fire and sword, paint charity in more contemptuous terms? It is a Christian age.

I retract saying I have found nothing new: I did not know that great part of the Spanish clergy adopted the compassion of Las Casas. I did not know that Las Casas—and there he was culpably bustling indeed!—suggested the idea of supplying the Spanish settlements with African slaves. This was guilt with a witness; for any lucrative mischief has fifty times more chance of being adopted, than a humane plan that combats interest. What contradictions

³ Hon. Caroline Howe.

⁴ Mr. Stonhewer.

⁵ *The History of America*, of which the first two volumes had recently

appeared.

⁶ Bartolomé de las Casas (1474–1566), Bishop of Chiapa, and ‘Apostle of the Indians.’

we are ! Las Casas had reason not to show [his] face, not because the one scheme failed, but because the other succeeded. Is not he a fine historian who insinuates that a virtuous man ought to blush if the perversity of the age defeats his efforts to correct it ? The doctrine no doubt will be applauded by all who have rendered *patriots* an opprobrious term for those who laboured to prevent the effusion of English and American blood. It is a tender-hearted age.

My nephew continues sullen and calm. This saves me alarms, though not business and fatigue ; yet I can get repose here, and now and then a moment to amuse myself. My Beauclerk tower is almost finished. Adieu !

1770. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1777.

I RETURN your Ladyship the General's letter, and you may be assured will never name it. The applying to him, I am satisfied, was a better method than what I suggested ; and I should hope, though he does not say so, that he will take some way of apprising his friends, as he must be sensible that it will be a kind office to all concerned for the young lady ; if, as I should think by Lady Louisa's¹ account they are, they should not yet be aware that the affair is not at an end.

I am glad, Madam, you was contented with your progress, and saw so much. Kenilworth is very awful ; yet what want of taste in the choice of the situation ! The chimney-piece in the gate-house I perfectly remember ; it has the Earl of Leicester's crest and devices, and I have often begged Lord Hyde to take care of it. It has too much of the degenerate Gothic, or I should have tried to purchase it, as the possessor loves money a little better than a

LETTER 1770.—¹ Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick.

chimney-piece he neglects. Althorp is a great favourite of mine, from the number of portraits, its old simplicity, and being so connected with our story. I gave Miss Loyd several corrections to the catalogue of pictures, for they had mistaken several.

Lord Warwick, I think, may forgive me for condemning a modern steeple that only lives near him, when I have such reverence for his own castle.

My French dinner went off tolerably well, except that five or six of the invited disappointed me, and the table was not full. The Abbé Raynal not only looked at nothing himself, but kept talking to the Ambassador the whole time, and would not let him see anything neither. There never was such an impertinent and tiresome old gossip. He said to one of the Frenchmen, we ought to come abroad to make us love our own country. This was before Mr. Churchill, who replied very properly, 'Yes, we had some Esquimaux here lately, and they liked nothing because they could get no train-oil for breakfast.' Madame de Jarnac had a *migraine*, and Monsieur chose to keep her company.

I am glad you have heard of Mr. Fitzpatrick. You know there is another war in that part of the world: the Spaniards have taken an island on the coast of Brazil²: I do not believe we shall dare to frown.

My hexagon closet will be finished in a fortnight, and then I shall be at liberty to pay my duty at Ampthill. The Churchills tell me the town says Lady Elizabeth Conway is to be married to Sir Matthew Fetherstone.

Have you got through Dr. Robertson, Madam? I am not enchanted. There is a great affectation of philosophizing without much success. But there is one character that charms me, besides Las Casas, at whom the good doctor rather

² St. Catherine's Island, taken in Feb. 1777.

sneers ; it is that of Pedro di Gasca³, who was disinterested enough to make ten Parliaments blush. Do but imagine the satisfaction with which he must have retired with his poverty, after the great things he had done, when every other of his countrymen were cutting the throats of Americans for gold ! He did not want to be Treasurer of the Navy, as well as general and pacificator⁴. I am delighted too with the ingratitude of the Spanish monarchs to all their heroic assassins. How fortunate the Otaheitans, to have no gold mines in their country !

1771. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 18, 1777.

I HAVE let a month lapse without writing to you, which is seldom my custom or fault. Nothing momentous you may be sure has happened, or I should not have been silent. My thoughts have been taken up with my nephew, who gives no signs of amendment. After very mature deliberation I have positively refused to take charge of his affairs. You know most of my reasons already. Could I see any prospect of doing good, I should step over his behaviour to me ; but as there is no chance of his treating me better, if he should have another lucid interval, as he probably will, I cannot consent to load myself with so much trouble, only to be again affronted at the end of it. Mr. Sharpe, the Countess's agent, has been wanting me to resume my function, in order to facilitate his letting one of her jointure farms : but what I will not do for my nephew, I will not do for her. Amidst all her professions, you know, my dear Sir, she was too cunningly insincere to trust me with serving her. She lost her boroughs by that

³ Pedro de la Gasca (1485-1560), Bishop of Placencia, sent in 1546 on a mission of pacification to Peru.

⁴ See pp. 59-60.

wise policy ; I could have let this farm three years ago, and now they are at sea about it. They may settle it as they please or can—*she* has not the excuse of being out of her senses. And as to Mr. Sharpe, he traversed all my endeavours to serve her ; and even now that he wants my assistance, invented a complaint of three years' standing, of which I never heard before, and in which I have made him own that I was not in the least to blame: the particulars are too long for a letter, nor worth repeating—but I have a little too much spirit to bear being distrusted, then accused, and still applied to. I did tell Mr. Sharpe it was extraordinary to find fault with me, and yet beg my assistance—but her Ladyship will never have it again. I showed her how incapable I was of not acting rightly by her. I never will do her any wrong ; but I do not desire the ostentation of serving people who hate to employ me. It was always more agreeable to me to avoid power than to seek it ; and I like to convince everybody, that, useful as I was to my Lord last time, I have more satisfaction in declining the government of his affairs than in conducting them.

The papers told you that Lord Chatham has again made his appearance¹. In his place, I think I should not have done so. I should prefer being forgotten, to putting the world in mind of me without effect. He should sleep on his laurels, and leave posterity to make the comparison between him and his successors ; who certainly are not prolific of trophies. Lord Cornwallis has gained a puny advantage, and Governor Tryon has burnt a magazine, which is thought a great blow to the provincials ; but the Howes are not in fashion. Lord Percy is come home disgusted by the younger ; and the elder will be as much disgusted, at least his family declare so for him, at missing

LETTER 1771.—¹ On May 30, 1777, when he unsuccessfully moved an

Address to the crown for the stoppage of the war in America.

the Treasurership of the Navy. The Duke of Marlborough's² avarice has been a theme of much abuse of late. I do not think this age has a right to cast a stone at the preceding. France to us sends most fair words; to America, stores and officers. Spain has seized an island from the Portuguese Queen; just as the powers of Europe treated the Empress-Queen on her father's death. I will not pity her Portuguese Majesty³, lest some time or other she should accede to a partition of Poland. I will never more judge of princes at their coronations, but at their burials.

One effect the American war has not had, that it ought to have had; it has not brought us to our senses. Silly dissipation rather increases, and without an object. The present folly is late hours. Everybody tries to be particular by being too late; and, as everybody tries it, nobody is so. It is the fashion now to go to Ranelagh two hours after it is over. You may not believe this, but it is literal. The music ends at ten; the company go at twelve. Lord Derby's cook lately gave him warning. The man owned he liked his place, but he should be killed by dressing suppers at three in the morning. The Earl asked him coolly at how much he valued his life? That is, he would have paid him for killing him. You see we have brought the spirit of calculation to perfection! I do not regret being old, for I see nothing I envy. To live in a crowd, to arrive everywhere too late, and to sell annuities for forty times more than I can ever pay, are not such supreme joys as to make me wish myself young again: indeed, one might execute all these joys at fourscore. I am glad the Emperor did not visit us. I hope he is gone home, thinking France the most trifling nation in Europe.

² The great General of Queen Anne. *Walpole*. had recently succeeded her father, Joseph I.

³ Maria, Queen of Portugal, who

I have received one of yours dated in May, but no day specified. I find you approve my not taking the direction of my nephew's affairs. I would if I had no reason but his insensibility, for one must do right without thinking of reward; and that of gratitude is an unnecessary one, as it is but the testimony of another to one's own conscience. He has had an interval, it is true, but it is my firm persuasion that he has not been perfectly in his senses from his youth; and can I expect that he who has never had any judgement should judge of me with rectitude? My reasons for declining are more substantial: I had no real authority before, and experienced I had not. He has put his affairs into the hands of a man of whom I think ill and have been forced to say so, and have no power to remove. This man and the crew may, on the first interval, make my Lord call in question and dispute all I might do. I would serve my Lord with my pains, but I will not pay for serving him. Lady Orford amused me with words, Mr. Sharpe threw every difficulty in my way. I had rather be wanted than ill-used.

I am extremely glad Lady Lucy⁴ is so much mended, and I trust she will live to reward your nephew's great merit towards her. I do believe, with your physicians, that warm weather will re-establish you. Patience I need not preach to you—it is part of you; but I will tell you what would expedite your recovery miraculously—the sea-air. Go to Leghorn, and drive on the shore; go out in a boat for a few hours: you will walk well in half a dozen. I have experienced this in as short a time as I prescribe. You will be angry, perhaps,—I mean, as much as you can be,—but I am not sorry you have a little gout; it will be a great preservative.

⁴ Lady Lucy Mann.

1772. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 19, 1777.

I THANK you for your notices, dear Sir, and shall remember that on Prince William¹. I did see the *Monthly Review*, but hope one is not guilty of the death of every man who does not make one the dupe of a forgery. I believe Mcpherson's success with *Ossian* was more the ruin of Chatterton than I. Two years passed between my doubting the authenticity of Rowley's poems and his death. I never knew he had been in London till some time after he had undone and poisoned himself there. The poems he sent me were transcripts in his own hand, and even in that circumstance he told a lie; he said he had them from the very person at Bristol to whom he had given them. If any man was to tell you that monkish rhymes had been dug up at Herculaneum, which was destroyed several centuries before there was any such poetry, should you believe it? Just the reverse is the case of Rowley's pretended poems. They have all the elegance of Waller and Prior, and more than Lord Surry—but I have no objection to anybody believing what he pleases. I think poor Chatterton was an astonishing genius—but I cannot think that Rowley foresaw metres that were invented long after he was dead, or that our language was more refined at Bristol in the reign of Henry V than it was at court under Henry VIII. One of the chaplains of the Bishop of Exeter has found a line of Rowley in *Hudibras*—the monk might foresee that too! The prematurity of Chatterton's genius is, however, full as wonderful, as that such a prodigy as Rowley should never have been heard of till the eighteenth century. The youth and industry of the former are miracles

LETTER 1772.—¹ Prince William of Hatfield.

too, yet still more credible. There is not a symptom in the poems, but the old words, that savours of Rowley's age. Change the old words for modern, and the whole construction is of yesterday.

The other story you tell me is very credible and perfectly in character.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1773. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 29, 1777.

I AM heartily vexed, Madam, at Lady Warwick's misadventure. See what comes of an education at Ampthill! Mr. Vernon, if he cares about grandchildren, should take away his daughters directly, or they will never have anything but peaches in brandy. The summer has made a *fausse-couche* too; I have no fruit, no flowers, no thrushes, no blackbirds. It is quite a folly to lay out vast sums in making landscapes in England; we have no weather to enjoy them, except one jubilee in five-and-twenty years. Our ancestors had more sense; they stuck themselves in a hole behind a hill, fenced out every wind with walls, and made a glass turret on the top of their mansions, not for a prospect, but to enjoy the few moments when the sun should condescend to come in person and look after his apple-orchards and hop-grounds. They were not so absurd as to import peaches, and nectarines, and pine-apples from the south, and Highlanders from the Orcades to look after them. Since we will give ourselves such torrid airs I wonder we do not go stark and tattoo ourselves. If I have got in our natural fruit, hay, and you will have a good fire of British oak, I purpose to wait on Lord Ossory and your Ladyship on the 16th or 17th of July, and instead of

brushing through dripping shrubberies, we will keep ourselves warm with hot cockles and blindman's-buff, and other old English sudorifics. My Lady Townshend, in the days of her wit, said that Mrs. Clive's face rose on Strawberry Hill and made it sultry; but I assure you, you may sit now in her beams when she is in her zenith without being tanned.

They say Lady Elizabeth Conway's match¹ is one of the apocryphal in the list of the forty couples which the town has laid out. I hope the other your Ladyship feared is so too. I wish any you wish may take place, but you shall not meddle a moment after the parson has said grace, for though you have the majesty of Juno, you shall never be invoked as Lucina. I even doubt whether little Guy would not have come to perfection, if you had not gone to Warwick Castle till autumn. In short, nothing can pacify me but a Lord Gowran. I wish Uncle Richard had stayed with you a month, and then who knows what a spiteful fit might have done!

I will try to take Crawford by storm, and hurry him into my chaise. If I give him warning, he will be sure of disappointing me.

Are you not glad, Madam, there is an end of talking of poor Dr. Dodd? I felt excessively for him, without a good opinion, for between the law and his friends, he suffered a thousand deaths. They say the tragedy of the father that accompanied the son, diverted most of the attention from Dr. Dodd.

A strange thing happened on Thursday, which I cannot tell you accurately, as it was translated to me through two or three very imperfect druggerswomen. He received a box in which were two or three small boxes. In the first a black one, in which he found a cornelian seal, with his

LETTER 1773.—¹ Lady Elizabeth Conway died unmarried in 1825.

own cipher and crest. Oh, I forgot to tell you *who* did—Mr. Child, of Osterley Park. With the seal was a writing, desiring him never to let the seal go out of his own hands. I was delighted, and concluded this was a talisman. No. In another box was a mourning-ring, with a topaz, others say an emerald, and some say the cornelian was an emerald. On the ring was a motto in Latin, implying, ‘Keep this in memory of a dying friend.’ There was a third box, or there was not, and nobody knows what was in it, whether there was one or not. The cabalists are of opinion, as the delivery was made on the eve of Dr. Dodd’s death, that the bequest was his, and that the seal implies that there is a forgery to come out on Mr. Child.

I am too late for the post, and, as I must go to town on Tuesday, I shall keep my letter till then, as it will have but one stage instead of two, with the chance of a postscript.

Le voici ce postscript.—I am *au fait* of Mr. Child’s mysterious present; I mean the circumstances, not the solution of the enigma, which it would be a pity to know yet. The first was a cornelian seal, with R. C., and Mr. Child’s crest, and these words, *Nemini confide sigillum*. No. 2 was a mourning-ring, with a topaz seal, cipher and crest as above, and round it this oracular sentence, *Anchora sacra deceptit*, which leave a charming latitude of guessing.

Oh, but here is another event more inexplicable still!—a letter has been sent to the club at Stapleton’s, directed to ‘L. S. D.’ No mortal man could be found to expound those letters: not an Œdipus in the whole society. At last a great adept, the sage John Manners, claimed the letter. His title was contested, for, though few clubs are Academies of Inscriptions, the members were clear-sighted enough to see that L. S. D. did not signify John Manners. However, he pleaded his great experience in pounds, shillings, and

pence, and insisted that the hieroglyphic letters in question, standing for those denominations, were more likely to be addressed to him than to any fellow of the society; and as far as great industry in appropriating to himself the things typified, nobody could deny the proposition; but as such a precedent would be too dangerous, and might encourage him to seize every piece of paper that commenced with these letters, the occult packet is put in sequestration, and hitherto no man has ventured to break the seal.

1774. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, July 6, 1777.

THERE is a blacker cloud than the rain come over my prospects, Madam, and I must wait its explosion! Without a figure, there is little chance of my being able to wait on you on the 16th, or sooner, which I see would be more convenient. A courier arrived yesterday from the Duchess of Gloucester to fetch Dr. Jebb and Adair to the Duke, though with little probability of their arriving time enough. We had heard he was ill, and that the surgeon that attends him had advised his setting out immediately for England, the heats of Italy having done him infinite prejudice. I believe the continual change of air and motion were the chief objects in view. He grew every day so much worse that he was put into his post-chaise and removed from Verona, but the Duchess says she did not expect he would be able to get beyond the first post. To overwhelm her completely, the little Prince¹ is not in a much better state. The distress of my poor nieces², who doat on their mother, and of my brother with his two sons-in-law³ so ill, and

LETTER 1774.—¹ Prince William Frederick of Gloucester.

² The Ladies Waldegrave.

³ The Duke of Gloucester and the Bishop of Exeter; the latter died in Dec. 1777.

with his two daughters in so melancholy a situation, calls for all the little comfort I am able to give them, and I dare not think of pleasing myself when there are such afflictions in my family. I will not dwell on these misfortunes. You are so good as to be amused with my idle gossiping, but I have no right to put your sensibility to different trials.

I have heard no more of the mysterious packets, nor indeed of anything else. I have no correspondents in town, and my French one⁴ does not trouble her head with anything beyond her own circle. I believe nothing I read in the newspapers about America; indeed they are arrived at a pitch of ignorance that would not be excusable in Greenland. They acquainted us last week, with great solemnity, that the Duchess of Queensberry was the famous Catherine Howard:—they might as well have said she was Anne Boleyn. My humble opinion is, that we shall never recover America, and that France will take care that we shall never recover ourselves. What scratches we may give or receive, *en attendant*, seem very little to the purpose; probably we shall tumble into a war with France before the latter quite intends it, though she may not care much if we do, and then we shall be frightened out of our senses, or into them, when it is too late. But all this is no business of mine, who have lived my time, and do not, as old folks often do, propose to govern the world after I am out of it. Few persons know when they should die; I mean when they should have done living. I have taken up my strulbrugship, only reserving a comfortable annuity of cheerfulness and amusement, as monarchs do who resign their crowns, and intend to have all the pleasures of royalty without the cares; but as Care never accedes to that compact, their majesties, and I their ape, find ourselves

⁴ Madame du Deffand.

mistaken. You see storms reach my little hill, as well as Mount Athos.

I wish your Ladyship had entered farther into criticisms on Dr. Robertson. I dare to answer I should approve them as much as Lord Ossory does. The very word *critical* is indeed a commentary. His philosophic solutions are as paltry as possible. You are, in good truth, a more real philosopher, Madam, when you can smile over such a mishap as you relate, and

Be mistress of yourself, though glasses break!

My little hexagon has been more fortunate, and is finished without an accident. I trust it will draw a visit from your Ladyship; you defrauded me of one this spring. If I should receive any good news from my unhappy Duchess, I shall not give up the 16th; if not, I must defer it to a moment when I shall be more at liberty.

P.S. Another letter is come, dated three days later, with better accounts. The Duke had borne a journey of two days very well, and slept eight hours. If these good symptoms continue, I shall treat myself with keeping my engagement. Mr. Beauclerk and Lady Di dined here to-day; he looks so much less ill than he did, that one need never despair of any recovery after his and Lazarus's.

1775. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, July 6, 1777.

I DON'T know anybody so much in the wrong as you are for not coming to me this summer; you would see such a marvellous closet, so small, so perfect, so respectable; you would swear it came out of Havering in the Bower, and that Catherine de Valois used to retire into it to

write to Owen Tudor. Lady Di's drawings—no offence to yours—are hung on Indian blue damask, the ceiling, door, and surbase are gilt, and in the window are two brave *fleur de lis* and a lion of England, all royally crowned in painted glass, which as Queen Catherine never did happen to write a *billet doux* in this closet, signify Beauclerc, the denomination of the tower. This cabinet is to be sacred and not shown to the profane, as the drawings are not for the eyes of the vulgar. Yours shall have a place, which is the greatest honour I can do them. Miss Pope¹ the actress, who is at Mrs. Clive's, dined here yesterday, and literally shed tears, though she did not know the story. I think this is more to Lady Di's credit, than a tomtit pecking at painted fruit. The ceiling was fortunately finished some time ago. My plasterer is turned raving Methodist, and has sent me a frantic letter without sense or grammar, but desiring leave to open me a new plan of the Gospel. I am glad he had no *new light* about making stucco!

Those gentry the Methodists will grow very troublesome, or worse; they were exceedingly unwilling to part with that impudent hypocrite, Dr. Dodd, and not less, to have forgery criminal. I own I felt very much for the poor wretch's protracted sufferings—but that was not the motive of their countenance; I cannot bear a militant arch-inquisitor, or an impostor in a tabernacle. Thank you for your reply to the former, &c.

I have no more *Gazettes Littéraires*, or *Politiques*. Linguet², the outcast of France, has published one here that makes some noise; part is satire on us, part panegyric, but in general very superficial. I have an anecdote apropos to him that is very curious. I will tell it you some day or other, but as it is a secret, I must not communicate it to the post office.

LETTER 1775.—¹ Jane Pope (1742–1818), the original 'Mrs. Candour' in *The School for Scandal*.

² Simon Nicolas Henri Linguet (1736–1794), historian. He had lately been imprisoned in the Bastille.

They have sent me from town a fourth volume of the *Archæologia*, or Old Women's Logic ; the first paragraph is as complete nonsense as my plasterer's letter.

Don't let this horrid weather put you out of humour with your *Garden*, though I own it is pity we should have brought gardening to perfection, and have too bad a climate to enjoy it. It is strictly true this year, as I have often said, that ours is the most beautiful country in the world, when framed and glazed ; but remember you can make the sun shine when you please, and as much as you please, and yet the verdure of your garden will be ever green. You are an excellent parish priest, catechize and make terriers, I believe, in perfection ; but pray do not forget poor poetry, your natural vocation, as you have done so long ; but you must be everything, an inventor of musical instruments, a painter, and a law suitor—

Besides a hundred freaks that died in thinking.

Well, I cannot help loving you with all your faults and all your perfections.

I am just now in great trouble, though a little relieved to-day by a better account. The Duke of Gloucester is extremely ill, and my poor niece in despair ! They are coming if they can to England for a little time, as the heat of the south is too mighty for him. How dear has ambition cost her ! Adieu.

As it is right to be impartial, which I am not naturally, I must tell you that at the end of the new *Archæologia* there is a very good essay on ancient castles, with very curious matter, by a Mr. King³. I don't know who he is—but it rains again, and there is no bearing it.

³ Edward King (d. 1807), barrister and miscellaneous writer. He was for a short time President of the Society of Antiquaries.

1776. TO VISCOUNT NUNEHAM.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1777.

As I know your Lordship and Lady Nuneham are so good as to interest yourselves about the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, I cannot deny myself the satisfaction of telling you, that, though the express on Saturday was as bad as possible, yet another letter yesterday from the Duke's surgeon, dated three days later, brought a more favourable account. His Royal Highness had been taken out of bed and put into a post-chaise, as it was thought nothing but change of air and motion could save him. He bore the travelling for two days very well, and got eight hours of sleep. The third day he was less well from fatigue, but the surgeon did not think him otherwise worse. I hope in God this alarm will pass off like the former!—but nothing, except her own words, could paint the agonies of the Duchess. She is alarmed too for the little Prince. They are coming to England, but not to stay, as Italian winters agree with the Duke, though the summers are so prejudicial.

Now I have taken this liberty, my dear Lord, I must take a little more; you know my old admiration and envy are your garden. I do not grudge Pomona or Sir James Cockburn their hothouses, nor intend to ruin myself by raising sugar and water in tanner's bark and peach skins. The *Flora Nunehamica* is the height of my ambition, and if your Linnæus should have any disciple that would condescend to look after my little flower-garden, it would be the delight of my eyes and nose, provided the cataracts of heaven are ever shut again! Not one proviso do I make, but that the pupil be not a Scot. We had peace and warm weather before the inundation of that northern

people, and therefore I beg to have no Attila for my gardener.

Apropos, don't your Lordship think that another set of legislators, the Maccaronis and Maccaronesses, are very wise? People abuse them for turning days, nights, hours, and seasons topsy-turvy; but surely it was upon mature reflection. We had a set of customs and ideas borrowed from the continent that by no means suited our climate. Reformers bring back things to their natural course. Notwithstanding what I said in spite in the paragraph above, we are in truth but Greenlanders and ought to conform to our climate. We should lay in store of provisions and candles and masquerades and coloured lamps for ten months in the year, and shut out our twilight and enjoy ourselves. In September and October we may venture out of our ark and make our hay and gather in our corn, and go to horse-races, and kill pheasants and partridges for stock for our winter's supper. I sailed in a skiff and pair this morning to Lady Cecilia Johnston, and found her, like a good housewife, sitting over her fire, with her cats and dogs and birds and children. She brought out a dram to warm me and my servants, and we were very merry and comfortable. As Lady Nuneham has neither so many two-footed or four-footed cares upon her hands, I hope her hands have been better employed.

I wish I could peep over her shoulder one of these wet mornings!

Adieu, my dear Lord; forgive all my babble. Yesterday's letter raised my spirits, and I love to impart my satisfaction to those I love, which, with all due respect, I must take leave to say I feel for you, and am most sincerely, &c.

1777. TO GEORGE HARDINGE.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1777.

You have long been good and kind to me, dear Sir. This new instance of your friendship is the kindest of all, and is not sown in barren ground. The choice the young lady¹ has made gives me a more favourable opinion of her than all your encomiums. I hope she will make you happy: and I will answer for your making her so, and that is a great deal in favour of the match; for I am of opinion that nine unhappy marriages in ten spring from faults on the husband's side. Women acquire liberty by marrying, find themselves happier than they were, and love the author. But men either perfidiously do not intend to confine themselves, or grow weary of the restraint: and the chains on our side are so easily shaken off, and so little shame attends the resumption of our liberty, that it is no wonder voluntary prisoners do not remain long in prison. You see, as partial as I am to you, I shall still be ready to think you to blame if you do not continue as happy as you seem to be at present. You are not quite young enough to have made an inconsiderable choice: the approbation of your family says you have not, and it is like your good sense to be pleased with their satisfaction. Your naming me favourably to the young lady, though a strain of friendship far beyond my merit, is another evidence of your good heart, and what I hope she will not think a mark of too much partiality in your disposition; for I wish her to respect your judgement as much as your other good qualities, and I doubt this is not the best proof you can give; yet she

LETTER 1777.—Not in C.; reprinted from Nichols' *Illustrations of Literary History*, vol. iii. p. 200.

¹ Lucy, daughter and heiress of

Richard Long, of Hinxton, Cambridgeshire, to whom Hardinge was married on Oct. 20, 1777.

will have the better opinion of mine for knowing how early I received them.

I can but wish you all the happiness and success I have long wished you, but I am glad you have new incitement to ambition, and the exercise of your talents. A marriage is likely to improve felicity when the wife has continual occasions of increasing her respect for her husband. I must do the ladies another piece of justice, which is to observe, that the wives of great men are generally excellent wives, and attached to their glory. The inference on the contrary is, that contempt is one cause of faults in the woman. I have certainly not thought much on the subject of matrimony, and perhaps my remarks may be more new than just; perhaps, too, observations suggested by common sense extempore are likely to be as true as those made on commonplace topics by premeditation. I have zeal enough to have sent you a better *Epithalamium*. It might have had compliments better turned: but wit or poetry would not have expressed my sincerity; and I am too old to write anything but what I think. So, be congratulated as you will, you will receive none more from the heart than these warm good wishes of, dear Sir,

Yours most cordially,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1778. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1777.

DON'T be alarmed at this thousandth letter in a week. This is more to Lady Hamilton¹ than to you. Pray tell her I have seen *Monsieur la Bataille d'Agincourt*². He

LETTER 1778.—¹ The first wife of Sir William Hamilton, Envoy Extraordinary at the court of Naples. *Walpole*.

² M. le Chevalier d'Agincourt, a French antiquary, long settled in Italy. *Walpole*.

brought me her letter yesterday : and I kept him to sup, *sleep* in the modern phrase, and breakfast here this morning ; and flatter myself he was, as she will be, content with the regard I paid to her letter.

The weather is a thought warmer to-day, and I am as busy as bees are about their hay. My *Hayssians*³ have cost me as much as if I had hired them of the Landgrave.

I am glad your invasion is blown over. I fear I must invite those flat-bottomed vessels hither, as the Swissess Necker has directed them to the port of Twickenham. Madame de Blot is too fine, and Monsieur Schomberg⁴ one of the most disagreeable, cross, contemptuous savages I ever saw. I have often supped with him at the Duchesse de Choiseul's, and could not bear him ; and now I must be *charmé*, and *pénétré*, and *comblé*, to see him : and I shall act it very ill, as I always do when I don't do what I like. Madame Necker's letter is as affected and *précieuse*, as if Marmontel had written it for a Peruvian milkmaid. She says I am a philosopher, and as like Madame de Sévigné as two peas—who was as unlike a philosopher as a gridiron. As I have none of Madame de Sévigné's natural easy wit, I am rejoiced that I am no more like a philosopher neither, and still less like a *philosophe* ; which is a being compounded of D'Urfey and Diogenes, a pastoral coxcomb, and a supercilious brute.

1779. TO ROBERT JEPHSON.

Strawberry Hill, July 13, 1777.

You have perhaps, Sir, paid too much regard to the observations I took the liberty to make, by your order, to a few passages in *Vitellia*, and I must hope they were in consequence of your own judgement too. I do not doubt of

³ Hessians. *Walpole*.

⁴ Charles, Comte de Schomberg. He was a friend of Voltaire.

its success on the stage, if well acted; but I confess I would answer for nothing with the present set of actors, who are not capable in tragedy of doing any justice to it. Mrs. Barry¹ seems to me very unequal to the principal part, to which Mrs. Yates alone is suited. Were I the author, I should be very sorry to have my tragedy murdered, perhaps miscarry. Your reputation is established; you will never forfeit it yourself—and to give your works to unworthy performers is like sacrificing a daughter to a husband of bad character. As to my offering it to Mr. Colman, I could merely be the messenger. I am scarce known to him, have no right to ask a favour of him, and I hope you know me enough to think that I am too conscious of my own insignificance and private situation to give myself an air of protection, and more particularly to a work of yours, Sir. What could I say, that would carry greater weight, than ‘This piece is by the author of *Braganza*’?

A tragedy can never suffer by delay: a comedy may, because the allusions or the manners represented in it may be temporary. I urge this, not to dissuade your presenting *Vitellia* to the stage, but to console you if both theatres should be engaged next winter. My own interests, from my time of life, would make me with reason more impatient than you to see it represented, but I am jealous of the honour of your poetry, and I should grieve to see *Vitellia* at Covent Garden—not that, except Mrs. Yates, I have any partiality to the tragic actors at Drury Lane, though Smith did not miscarry in *Braganza*—but I speak from experience. I attended *Caractacus* last winter, and was greatly interested, both from my friendship for Mr. Mason and from the excellence of the poetry. I was out of all patience; for though a young Lewis² played a subordinate part very well,

LETTER 1779.—¹ Widow of the actor, Spranger Barry; she married one Crawford in 1778, and died in 1801.

² William Thomas Lewis (d. 1811), known as ‘Gentleman Lewis.’

and Mrs. Hartley looked her part charmingly, the Druids were so massacred, and Caractacus so much worse, that I never saw a more barbarous exhibition. Instead of hurrying *The Law of Lombardy*, which, however, I shall delight to see finished, I again wish you to try comedy. To my great astonishment there were more parts performed admirably in *The School for Scandal* than I almost ever saw in any play. Mrs. Abington was equal to the first of her profession, Yates (the husband), Parsons³, Miss Pope, and Palmer⁴, all shone. It seemed a marvellous resurrection of the stage. Indeed, the play had as much merit as the actors. I have seen no comedy that comes near it since *The Provoked Husband*.

I said I was jealous of your fame as a poet, and I truly am. The more rapid your genius is, labour will but the more improve it. I am very frank, but I am sure that my attention to your reputation will excuse it. Your facility in writing exquisite poetry may be a disadvantage; as it may not leave you time to study the other requisites of tragedy so much as is necessary. Your writings deserve to last for ages; but to make any work last, it must be finished in all parts to perfection. You have the first requisite to that perfection, for you can sacrifice charming lines, when they do not tend to improve the whole. I admire this resignation so much, that I wish to turn it to your advantage. Strike out your sketches as suddenly as you please, but retouch and retouch them, that the best judges may for ever admire them. The works that have stood the test of ages, and been slowly approved at first, are not those that have dazzled contemporaries and borne away their applause, but those whose intrinsic and laboured merit have shone the brighter

³ William Parsons (1736-1795), the original 'Crabtree' in *The School for Scandal*.

⁴ John Palmer (d. 1798), the original 'Joseph Surface.'

on examination. I would not curb your genius, Sir, if I did not trust it would recoil with greater force for having obstacles presented to it.

You will forgive my not having sent you the *Thoughts on Comedy*, as I promised. I have had no time to look them over and put them into shape. I have been and am involved in most unpleasant affairs of family, that take up my whole thoughts and attention. The melancholy situation of my nephew Lord Orford engages me particularly, and I am not young enough to excuse postponing business and duties for amusement. In truth, I am really too old not to have given up literary pleasures. Nobody will tell one when one grows dull, but one's time of life ought to tell it one. I long ago determined to keep the archbishop in *Gil Blas* in my eye, when I should advance to his caducity ; but as dotage steals in at more doors than one, perhaps the sermon I have been preaching to you is a symptom of it. You must judge of that, Sir. If I fancy I have been wise, and have only been peevish, throw my lecture into the fire. I am sure the liberties I have taken with you deserve no indulgence, if you do not discern true friendship at the bottom of them.

1780. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, July 15, 1777.

I HAVE barely time to write a line, and it is to thank your Ladyship for your very kind letter, which I will obey the first instant I am at liberty. I came to town this morning on business with my brother, for Lord Orford is no better, and everything is in confusion. I had a letter from the Duchess ; the Duke had had a tolerable night, and she begins to hope the crisis is over, but he still keeps his bed, and is as weak as possible. The hot weather, and my ocean of troubles, serious or trifling, affect my nerves

so, that I can scarce write. I am a fine Hercules to think of doing twenty times more than I have strength for.

1781. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 17, 1777.

You are very kind, my dear Sir, in your inquiries about the Duke of Gloucester. You will have heard, long before you receive this, how very ill his Royal Highness has been. I wish I could say I was yet quite easy about him. We are very impatient for to-morrow's letters. It is unfortunate that he did not pass the summer again at Castel Gondolfo¹. The heats and nauseous air of Venice immediately affected him deeply, and I fear his Royal Highness's mind was not in a situation to resist outward impressions². He fell away exceedingly, had a flux at Padua, and at Verona was so reduced, that he was persuaded to return to England. Before he could set out, he grew daily so much worse, that he was taken out of bed and put into a post-chaise, and made journeys for two days of twenty-six and thirty miles; at the end of which he slept eight hours, and mended a little. The Duchess, in the meantime, half distracted, sent a courier for Dr. Jebb and Adair; who, we hope, arrived last Saturday; for Dr. Jebb promised to post without pulling off his clothes. The Duke got to Trent, and found himself refreshed from the cool air of the mountains: but his dysentery returned with violent pains. He keeps his bed; but when the last letters came away, which was on the 4th of this month, his surgeon-page hoped the extremity of the danger was over. It is, indeed, impossible ever to be secure about so precarious a constitution;

LETTER 1781.—¹ A country house near Rome belonging to the Pope.

² He was depressed by the treat-

ment he had met with from the King, and by his failure to secure a provision for his children.

and, unless his Royal Highness's mind is set at peace about his family, I fear he has not strength to resist the anxiety that preys upon a state of health too obnoxious to every kind of attack. To add to the Duchess's misery, her little boy was in a bad way at the same moment—but he has cut a tooth, and has another coming, and they hope the disorder arose thence.

You inquire about America, and what Lord Percy³ says. I cannot give you information from any authority. I live here, and see nobody of either side that knows anything. The Duchess's three daughters⁴ are, by his Royal Highness's goodness, lodged in Hampton Court Park, which is very near me, and take up most of my time. They are charming girls: I don't mean only their persons, but good, sweet-tempered, admirably brought up, and amiable in every respect. I try to amuse and improve them; though I have little to do on the latter head, and they are so reasonable and easily contented, even with the company of an old uncle, that even the other is not difficult. But what is all this to America, except that it proves how little it occupies me? The last *Gazette* informed us that General Howe was but then going to open the campaign, having been in want of campaign equipage. I do not know that Lord Percy says anything; for I have heard he is very circumspect. He certainly does not talk of pacification. He is said to say that this campaign will finish the war. I doubt his having said so, as the ministers are not said to be of that opinion. In the meantime, American privateers infest our coasts; they keep Scotland in alarms, and even the harbour of Dublin has been newly strengthened with cannon. But there is a much bigger cloud ready to burst. The open

³ Earl Percy returned from America in consequence of a disagreement with General Howe.

⁴ The Ladies Laura, Maria, and

Horatia Waldegrave, daughters of the Duchess of Gloucester by her first husband, James, Earl Waldegrave Walpole.

protection and countenance given by France to the Americans is come to a crying height. We complain: I know not what civil words they give, but they certainly give us no satisfaction. The general opinion is, that we are at the eve of a war with them. Should the Americans receive any blow, my own sentiments are, that France would openly espouse their quarrel, not being at all disposed to let them be crushed. You know that at the beginning of this contest I told you I thought it would be an affair of long duration. A French war would abridge it—but how? I will prophesy nothing on that head. I don't like to look into that book.

You tell me Lady O. has been very ill. I wish her no ill, but *au reste* am most indifferent about her. Her son seems to be sunk into a low-spirited sullen state. We have now very sultry weather, and as he does not grow furious, Dr. Monroe thinks it indicates fixed madness. The faculty will certainly not pronounce in a hurry again. Sir Edward and I will as certainly take no steps of any kind, but wait the course of the disorder with patience. We are in no haste to meddle. They who excluded us from my Lord's confidence will not have much reason to rejoice in their triumph. Lady O., who would not trust me, already feels the inconvenience of having waived my services—if Mr. Sharpe sends her true accounts. It is no business of mine whether he does or not.

I am exceedingly glad of the improved accounts you send me of Lady Lucy's health, and of the comfort she and your nephew are to you. I knew how much you would like him, and then how much you would love him. I hope he will have a little boy for you to love too, especially as it will be a proof of Lady Lucy's perfect recovery.

I have no events to send you. London, I suppose, is very empty at this season; but I have little dealings

with it. The affairs of my family find me full employment, and it is the most suitable one at my time of life. Adieu!

1782. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Saturday night, July 19, 1777.

I WOULD have given sixpence for a quarter of an hour this morning to have answered your Ladyship's letter, but three persons dropped in one after another, and kept me till I was too late to dress, and so I made Mr. Morrice wait half an hour for dinner. It was a party made for Lady Blandford, who at last did not come, nor Lady Jane Scott, who was gone to town to buy mourning for the Duchess of Queensberry, who died on Thursday of a surfeit of cherries, as my old Countess of Desmond of robbing a walnut-tree, for the Duchess's beauty at seventy-seven was as extraordinary as the other's at hundred and forty years.

I am now positively, and ultimately, and unputoffably determined, if you will let me, to be at Ampthill on Tuesday se'nnight. The Duke of Gloucester is better, and again set out; but I have so much to do this week that I cannot get away sooner, and I think the day I named comes within the time prescribed before Lord Ossory's journey to the north. I have made no idle excuses, for you see I have not stirred an inch from home this whole summer. Two days ago I did fear the gout was coming: I had walked too much in the heat, and as exercise always hurts me, I waked in the night in great pain; but it is gone, and, I trust, for some time.

I heartily pity Mr. Fitzpatrick¹ for being engaged in this

LETTER 1782.—¹ Fitzpatrick joined his regiment in America in March 1777.

abominable war, that is big with another, and both with ruin. Nobody do I see but holds that with France unavoidable, since they are determined to try how much we will bear; and I hear of ministers, and of more ministerlings who would be fain thought to have had no share in the culpability of our measures. I am sure they who have not had, have cause to congratulate themselves. My cousin, Dick Walpole, one of my this morning's visitors, told me there is a fresh account of Lord Cornwallis's defeat; if true, it is not owned. Lord Dysart has lost his youngest brother William², whose ship the *Repulse*, with all in it, an hundred and fifty! sunk in a storm on the 26th of *last December*. This shows what early and certain intelligence we get from America! Lady Bridget³, whom I do not quote as gospel, told me last night that it is far from certain that Lord Mulgrave⁴ is safe. I doubt, as the Apocalypse says, the seals of the last book are not opened yet!

1783. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 4, 1777.

You know I do not stand upon debtor and creditor with you, but should have indulged my pleasure of writing to you, if I had been master of a moment's leisure or peace of mind. The various distresses and misfortunes of my family have engrossed me entirely. My nephew continues to fluctuate between violence and stupidity; as the last is not alarming, and there are scarce hopes of any comfortable recovery, I am inclined to wish it took place totally. In the meantime his affairs are as distracted, and have driven

² Hon. William Tollemache.

³ Lady Bridget Tollemache.

⁴ Constantine John Phipps (1744-1792), second Baron Mulgrave. He was a captain in the navy, and in

1773 was appointed to the command of the *Racehorse*, sent out with the *Carcass* to discover a northern route to India.

me into a paper war with his agent. The Duke of Gloucester is still exceedingly ill; Dr. Jebb flatters us he shall bring him to England, but promises nothing more. The Bishop of Exeter has been dying these nine months, but at last seems recovering. All these calamities and their consequential details have left me no time for amusement or attention to anything else, and unless American privateers attack Hampton Court, I shall forget almost that there are thirteen colonies. In good truth they seem fully able to take care of themselves, nay, at leisure to return our invasions. If they burn Edinburgh, I shall not cry fire.

Lord John Cavendish is returned from a visit to his sister¹ in Ireland, and gives a droll description of Viceroy Buckingham's entrenchments, which are not quite so strong as Dictator Washington's, except in gin-shops. The rest of the encampment consists in three tents. The Ossianites² rave against Howe. Madame de Noailles, the Ambassador's wife, arrives to-day with a sprig, I believe, of rue in her mouth merely to keep her from laughing. Cunningham³ sailed from Dunkirk with orders to be very civil till in wide ocean, but mistook the Channel for it, and made nine prizes, which if he sent to Dunkirk will obtain his pardon. I heard this morning that France has fifteen thousand men in India, who I suppose have orders not to take Bengal within sight of the French coast. A good courtisan told me last night, as a counterpoise to all these *unforeseen accidents*, that Lord Chatham has had a fall from his horse, in a fit. The bells are ringing—perhaps on that account.

I have no more *Gazettes Littéraires* yet, but I have a new

LETTER 1783. —¹ Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, second daughter of third Duke of Devonshire; m. (1742) Hon. John Ponsonby, second son of first Earl of Bessborough.

² The Scotch.

³ The captain of an American privateer, who in April 1777 took and brought into Dunkirk an English packet boat carrying the King's messenger and mails.

work that I will lend you, that you will read, though very tiresome and ill written, printed here by some of the excrement of Paris. It is called *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l'Histoire de la République des Lettres en France depuis 1762 jusqu'à nos jours*⁴. It is a journal of all the minor politics, literature, theatric anecdotes, scandal and fashions of that country, and as all those heads compose much of their politics, it is the history of everything but their foreign politics. There are eight thick duodecimos, ill written, with no judgement, and very partial, almost against everybody and thing, however it shows them, and that they make little better figure than we do, though we are so low! I think a man of sense and taste should blush to be talked of in either country. I think you are too difficult, however, about the *Ode*⁵ and the *Epistle to Shebbeare*, which will survive when all our trash is forgotten. What do you think of the immortal lines on Cox's Museum⁶? I beg your pardon too, if I cannot see the sin of omission in some lines of Horace⁷ not being paraphrased in so heinous a light. The author does not profess a translation, and surely was at liberty to take only what parts he found to his purpose. If I had time, I dare to say I could prove to you that the *Ode* is a stricter imitation than those of Pope; but alas! I have other guess *besogne*; however, to show you I have not totally abandoned all the occupations I love, I will mention an instance I chanced upon t'other day of the barbarity of the French language in poetry. I happened to open a volume of Voltaire at Lord Ossory's, and found this beginning of a scene in one of his plays:—

Enfin donc désormais.

⁴ By Louis Petit de Bachaumont (1690–1771).

⁵ An *Ode to Sir Fletcher Norton*, and an *Epistle to Dr. Shebbeare*, published by Mason in 1777 under the

name of Malcolm Macgregor.

⁶ Lines 204–21 of the *Epistle*.

⁷ An allusion to a note of Mason's on the *Ode*.

Match me that hemistich if you can in a tragedy of the Sauromatæ.

Garrick is dying of the yellow jaundice on the success of Henderson⁸, a young actor from Bath—*Enfin donc désormais* there must never be a good player again. As Voltaire and Garrick are the god and goddess of Envy, the latter would put a stop to procreation, as the former would annihilate the traces of all antiquity, if there were no other gods but they.

I do not wonder you have had such bad crops both in your meadows and in chancery; consider how long since any sun shone on either. My *Hayssians* have cost me as much as if I had hired them of the Landgrave. One would think the elements this summer came from Scotland too; and I am surprised Sir John Dalrymple or Macpherson has not told us from the *dépôt des affaires étrangères*, that the sun is an enemy to English constitutions. *Vivent les brouillards!* I will finish with anticipating the best trait in the books I promise you. The witty Piron made a visit to that old bigot, the Archbishop of—(not York, but) Paris, soon after his issuing a thundering mandate against some French Whigs, of which his Grace had certainly not written one word. He asked Piron, ‘L’avez-vous lu?’—‘Oui, Monseigneur, et vous?’

Yours ever,

H. W.

1784. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 8, 1777.

MY incorrect impromptu deserved no thanks, Madam; nor should I have sent it but as it proved I left you with regret. I can snatch but moments for anything I like.

⁸ John Henderson (1745–1785), whose reputation in his day was second only to that of Garrick.

I had chalked out a more pleasing plan for this part of my life, but it is sadly traversed, and I must submit. I received a most melancholy account yesterday of my nephew, who seems sinking into idiocy, and picks up straws. This state will be free from alarms, but probably will involve me again in the care of his affairs ; however, I shall wait with patience for some certainty, nor embark without better authority than I did last time. I am not more easy about the Duke, whose situation is still very perilous ; and if I did not know Dr. Jebb for the most despondent of men, my hopes would be small indeed ; yet I by no means despair. I must count my pleasures too with my pains. My niece's¹ match with Lord Cadogan, since she herself approves it, gives me great satisfaction. She is one of the best and most discreet young women in the world, and her husband, I am sure, is fortunate. You will think I have been mysterious, but believe me, I did not know it till yesterday. I had expected it, but was grown to think it would not be. Lord Suffolk is certainly to marry Lady Aylesford's daughter, Lady Charlotte². She cannot complain of being made a nurse, for he could have no other reason for marrying her, she is so plain, and I suppose he knows she is good or sensible. I said so to Lady Bridget Tollemache, and she replied, 'How does one know whether a homely young woman is good or not before she is married?'—She is in the right.

It was Sir Charles and not George Montagu that is dead, as my hostess of St. Albans told me. Lord Villiers, who has fashioned away all he has, is to remove with his wife to his mother's³, and live there. This was a great match.

LETTER 1784.—¹ Mary, daughter of Colonel Churchill ; m. (Aug. 1777) third Baron (afterwards first Earl) Cadogan, from whom she was divorced in 1798.

² Lady Charlotte Finch, eldest daughter of third Earl of Aylesford ; m. (Aug. 1777) Henry Howard, twelfth Earl of Suffolk ; d. 1808.

³ Countess Grandison.

I am glad Lord Cadogan is past one-and-twenty, and wish all my nieces may marry fathers rather than sons.

Have you read General Burgoyne's rhodomontade⁴, in which he almost promises to cross America in a hop, step, and a jump? I thought we were cured of hyperboles. He has sent over, too, a copy of his talk with the Indians, which they say is still more supernatural. I own I prefer General Howe's taciturnity, who at least, if he does nothing, does not break his word. It is supposed the latter is sailed to Boston, and that the former has kicked Ticonderoga into one of the lakes—I don't know which, I am no geographer.

I met the new French Ambassadress t'other night at the Prince of Masserano's, at Isleworth. She is a little mouse in a cheese, not ugly, but with no manner. I am glad summer is come along with her; I began to think it was taken by a privateer.

I am not going to make a job of you, Madam, nor to sell my friends to my relations, but I do wish you had Lord Villiers's house, and hope the name of the street⁵ will be no objection. It is brave, magnificently furnished, and in good taste. If Lord Ossory could get the lease, the furniture would be an immense pennyworth, as it has not been violated but by one ball and three or four assemblies. The rent, 450*l.*, is but the odd fifty beyond your present palace. It is seriously worth thinking about. There is a noble hall and staircase, an excellent drawing-room to the street, vast eating-room, and another chamber. On the first floor an anteroom, and three more very large rooms all four quintessenced with Adamitic mode, and yet not filigreed into puerility like l'Hôtel de Derby. The back-stairs to the second floor, I am told, are bad; but must children and servants go to bed up

⁴ A manifesto addressed to the revolted colonists.

⁵ Grafton Street, which might

remind Lady Ossory of her first marriage.

the steps of the Capitol? Remember, nobody is in town, and this scarce known. I would advise Lord Ossory to seize the moment, were it but to sell again. Lord Buckingham was offered six hundred a year for his house. I would not advise anybody I loved to furnish a house like Lord Villiers's; but to buy one so furnished at an estimate second-hand, though quite new, is what I should call prudence in a man of Lord Ossory's rank and fortune. In short, I could step to you in my slippers; don't wonder I am eager. Pray send our Lord to town the moment he returns, and me such an answer as I shall like.

1785. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 11, 1777.

I WRITE in a most anxious moment, and tremble lest you should know worse than we have heard yet. I had a letter from the Duchess¹ on Tuesday, that raised our hopes. Yesterday brought one from Dr. Jebb to my brother, that dashed them down again. Sir Edward, who is truly very sagacious in physical cases, does not despond; and I, always disposed to expect what I wish, and who do not believe that it is so easy to die as is imagined, do not quite despair—yet that word *quite* would scarce turn a scale against a feather. I dare not look farther, nor figure the distress of the Duchess, if the dreadful misfortune should happen. Lord Cholmondeley is gone to Trent, and will be of great use and comfort—but I will hope yet. Do not wonder, nor take it ill, that nobody thought of writing to you: think but of what the distress and confusion must be; and how little they could attend to anything but writing to England. I, here, only contemplating in melancholy tranquillity the misfortune hanging over my poor niece, should not write

LETTER 1785.—¹ Of Gloucester.

to many but you at such a moment. The Duke's family must be exhausted with fatigue and anxiety, and I fear barely able to go through their duty. You should pity them, not suspect them of neglect.

I can tell you nothing else that you will like much better. The conquest of America is put off to the millennium. It is hoped, and thence supposed, that General Howe is gone to take some place, or beat some army, that is more practicable than dislodging Washington. Burgoyne has sent over a manifesto, that, if he was to overrun ten provinces, would appear too pompous; and yet, let him achieve ever so little, it will be sure of not being depreciated; so great is the want of something to keep up the spirits of the people, who stare a little at being bullied on their own coasts, after being told that five thousand men would overrun all America. France sits by and laughs, receives our remonstrances, sends us an ambassadress, and winks on Dr. Franklin, that it is all the comfort she will give us.—I believe you will not wish me to expatiate more on *that* chapter.

Lord Orford seems to be sinking into a state of infancy. I am not sorry you did not name him to his mother—you could not make her feel, and then it is not worth while to make her blush. I am laying in to serve him, by trying to drive away his crew. Unless I can do that, which I doubt, I will not meddle with his affairs. I endeavour to provoke or to frighten them; but I conclude attorneys and rogues are vermin not easily rooted out of a rich soil.

Lady Mary Churchill's² eldest daughter is married to Lord Cadogan. She is very pretty, amiable, and eight-and-twenty; he, rich and fifty. It is a great match for her, and in my opinion preferable to one with most of our youths, who dissipate enormous fortunes in a couple of years. I have not time to say more now, nor any event to tell you.

² Mr. Walpole's sister. *Walpole.*

P.S. Sir W. Hamilton was set out before I received the letter you sent me for him. I will send it after him when I can learn whither, but he will not be at Naples for many months.

1786. TO LADY CECILIA JOHNSTON.

Aug. 19, 1777.

OUR abdicated monarch, Lear¹,
 And bonny Dame Cadwallader²,
 With a whole theatre in one³ from France,
 And Raftor⁴, wont th' Eclipse in Hays to dance,
 Next Saturn's day, if fair or foul,
 On bacon, ham, and chicken-fowl,
 Intend with Horace—no great bard,
 Nor one of Epicurus' herd—
 To dine. Oh, would divine Cecilia deign,
 With her brave warrior⁵ to augment the train,
 From every castle famed in days of yore,
 Of which, or poets or romancers tell,
 For wit and cheerfulness, and humour—store,
 My Strawberry, my Strawberry, shall bear away the bell.

1787. TO VISCOUNT NUNEHAM.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 24, 1777.

As I am sure the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester have no well-wishers more sincere than your Lordship and Lady Nuneham, I flatter myself I shall give both pleasure by taking the liberty of letting you know that all the letters of the 12th are in a new style, and speak of his Royal Highness as much mended. Those of the 8th were full of despair. He had set up an hour, and the Duchess had been

LETTER 1786.—¹ Garrick, who retired from the stage in 1776.

² Mrs. Clive, who created that part in *The Author* by Foote, produced at Drury Lane in 1757.

³ Le Texier.

⁴ Mrs. Clive's brother. See letter to Viscount Nuneham of Dec. 6, 1773.

⁵ Her husband, General Johnston.

out to take the air, after not quitting one floor for seven weeks, nor writing for three, so immediate had been her apprehensions. The physicians flattered her that the Duke would be able to begin his journey in a fortnight. I shall be overjoyed to hear he has, as constant change of air and motion will restore his strength faster than anything. They hope to be in England in October.

I dined to-day at Lady Cecilia's. She tells me the French Ambassador and Ambassadress are going to Nuneham. The poor Prince of Masserano, I doubt, is on the point of a longer journey. I will not, under pretence of a duty, be tiresome, though so great a pleasure to converse with you.

1788. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 24, 1777.

Not Apollo on his forked hill, nor *le Dieu Phœbus*, nor 'full-blown Bufo,' nor Lord Bute when he sat on the altar of the Treasury and inhaled clouds of Scotch incense—ay, and of English too—could be more proud than I am with having inspired your Ladyship with French verses: to be sure I should have returned them, if I was as thorough-paced a poetaster as Madame Pinto supposes. She came to see my house t'other day, and told me in *Portughée-French*, that '*poutêtre* she detoured me from making *des petits vers*.' I hate to have a scrap of reputation, and had rather anybody thought I could not write my name; unless all Dame Pintos had the simplicity of Balzac's neighbour, who assured him he had a profound respect for him and *messieurs ses livres*. I wonder how a real genius supports the absurd compliments he must meet with: I know, when they tumble down to my sphere, they make me sweat.

The Duke of Gloucester is risen from the dead. You may judge, Madam, how far gone he was, when all the

letters were full of transports at his having sat up an hour ! The Duchess tells me she has been out to take the air, after not stirring out of their apartment for seven weeks. In truth, I was almost as much frightened about *her*, for, after writing to some of us constantly twice a week since the commencement of the Duke's illness, three posts arrived without a line from her. I had pain enough to stifle my own apprehensions and hush those of her poor daughters. Her own letter to me in the midst of her joy is the most moving I ever read. If the physicians did not confirm the accounts of his Royal Highness's great amendment, I should doubt that a flash of hope through such a gloom had elated their spirits too much. Probably a kind message from the King by Colonel Jennings wrought the miracle ; but I must not omit a charming trait of a little girl in the house where they lodged. The Duke longed for potatoes. None were to be found. A messenger was sent twenty miles. The poor little soul, hearing such a hubbub for potatoes, asked what sort of things they were. On their being described, she said not a word, but stole out to a convent where she had seen some, begged four, and brought them for the Duke, who ate them all eagerly, and desired more.

Infidels may think what they will, but I am convinced it was a cherub, and conclude it has never appeared since. The famous Council that sat at Trent would have given a thousand ducats for a glimpse of inspiration a quarter as big.

You ask what I meant by *the Dorset's self*, &c.—alas ! very little ; only that Ampthill would miss the fair Vernons, though Lady Holland and Lady Louisa were there. To be sure, I might have used those very words, as well as a line from Prior that did not express my meaning. The truth is, that as I generally write in a hurry, and say anything that comes into my head, it may well be that nonsense is the

first to present itself, and then it is sure to take its place forwards, as it would in a stage-coach. For the future, I beg your Ladyship will suppose that if I blotted my letters, they would be perfectly intelligible; but as I trust you have too much taste not to prefer natural nonsense once in ten days to the sublime galimatias which one is composing for eight months in winter quarters, I shall go on in my old way, and not endeavour to take you by surprise after prodigious preparation.—Pray observe the art of this paragraph: it implies the conquest of Ticonderoga¹. If you had not been so dull about Dorset, I should not have explained it.

I firmly believe Mézerai² is the best history of France; not because I have read it, but because I have not, and it is reckoned so. I don't always find that books answer their characters: my knowledge of everything is picked up from memoirs, novels, &c. I never dealt in substantial works; and though few simple gentlemen have read more, my memory is a chaos of aughts and ends, and fit for nobody's use but my own. How should I, Madam, recommend a course of reading, who hold learning very cheap, and only read for amusement, and never perused six pages of Scotch metaphysics in all my days?

I don't wonder Lord Ossory preferred Thoresby to the three old dukeries. So did I, and did not admire it much neither. Worksop is an artificial ugly forest of evergreens; Clumber aspires to the same merit, but is yet in leading-strings. Welbeck is in the other extremity, a devastation. The house is the delight of *my* eyes, for it is an hospital of old portraits. Merry Sherwood is a *trist* region, and wants a race of outlaws to enliven it, and as Duchess Robin-Hood³

LETTER 1788.—¹ It was taken by Burgoyne on July 6, 1777.

² François Eudes de Mézerai (1610–1683).

³ The Duchess of Kingston.

has run her country, it has little chance of recovering its ancient glory.

I think I shall step to Goodwood on Wednesday for a couple of days, if Tuesday's letters continue favourable. I had given up all thoughts of that journey; but the Conways and Mrs. Damer are going thither on their way to Mount Edgcumbe, and have almost persuaded me—not to go to the Land's End—I have no such long holidays.

I heard to-day at Richmond that Julius Cæsar Burgonius's Commentaries are to be published in an extraordinary *Gazette* of three-and-twenty pages in folio, to-morrow—a counterpart to the *Iliad* in a nutshell! I hope we shall have a Louvre edition of King Buckingham's⁴ Ordinances on Etiquette.

1789. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 31, 1777.

YOU are very kind, dear Sir, in giving me an account of your health and occupations, and inquiring after mine. I am very sorry you are not as free from gout, as I have been ever since February; but I trust it will only keep you from other complaints, and never prevent your amusing yourself, which you are one of those few happy beings that can always do: and your temper is so good, and your mind so naturally philosophic, composed, and contented, that you neither want the world, care about it, nor are affected by anything that happens in it. This is true wisdom, but wisdom which nothing can give but constitution. Detached amusements have always made a great part of my own delight, and have sown my life with most of its best moments. My intention was, that they should be the employments of my latter years, but fate seems to have chalked out a very different scene for me! The misfortune

⁴ The Viceroy of Ireland.

of my nephew has involved me in business, and consequently care, and opens a scene of disputes, with which I shall not molest your tranquillity.

The dangerous situation in which his R. H. the Duke of Gloucester has been, and out of which I doubt he is scarce yet emerged, though better, has added more thorns to my uneasy mind. The Duchess's daughters are at Hampton Court, and partly under my care. In one word, my whole summer has been engrossed by duties, which have confined me at home, without indulging myself in a single pursuit to my taste. In short, as I have told you before, I often wish myself a monk at Cambridge. Writers on government condemn, very properly, a recluse life, as contrary to nature's intent, who loves procreation. But as nature seems not very desirous that we should propagate to three-score years and ten, I think convents very suitable retreats for those whom our *Alma Mater* does not emphatically call to her *Opus Magnum*. And though, to be sure, grey hairs are fittest to conduct state affairs, yet as the Rehoboams of the world (Louis XVI excepted) do not always trust the rudder of government to ancient hands, old gentlemen, methinks, are very ill-placed (when not at the council-board) anywhere but in a cloister. As I have no more vocation to the ministry than to carrying on my family, I sigh after a dormitory; and as in six weeks my clock will strike sixty, I wish I had nothing more to do with the world. I am not tired of living, but—but what signifies sketching visions? One must take one's lot as it comes: bitter and sweet are poured into every cup. To-morrow may be pleasanter than to-day. Nothing lasts of one colour. One must embrace the cloister, or take the chances of the world as they present themselves: and since uninterrupted happiness would but embitter the certainty that even that must end, rubs and crosses should be softened by the same consideration.

I am not so busied, but I shall be very glad of a sight of your MS., and will return it carefully. I will thank you, too, for the print of Mr. Jenyns, which I have not, nor have seen.

Adieu ! dear Sir,

Yours most cordially,

H. W.

1790. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 1, 1777.

THE Duke¹ is still struggling at Trent. Ten days ago the letters were suddenly and wonderfully mended, and we flattered ourselves the danger was quite over. The next post brought a little relapse, and great complaint of the heats. Two days ago we were a little comforted again. He had had two exceedingly good nights; and having gained so much time, and the physicians no longer speaking despondingly, though they will not from prudence give too great hopes, we trust we shall again see his Royal Highness in England. The Duchess's distress has equalled anything we could figure. For three weeks she did not write a syllable, nor even saw Mrs. Heywood². She tells Lady Laura, her daughter, that she did nothing but pray and weep. She has still much to go through. It is well her constitution and courage are so firm. It will be the end of October at soonest before they can be at home. When the Duke is able to travel, I shall expect great things from motion and change of air. The King has sent him a kind message: it will do more than twenty physicians, and I believe produced the amendment, for his heart was broken.

General Burgoyne has taken Ticonderoga, and given

LETTER 1790. — ¹ The Duke of Gloucester. chamber who attended the Duchess of Gloucester abroad. *Walpole*.

² One of the Women of the Bed-

a new complexion to the aspect of affairs, which was very wan indeed. General Howe is gone with a great force somewhither, and the moment is very critical. I don't pretend to form any judgement. Eleven months ago I thought America subdued; and a fortnight ago it was as little likely to be subdued as ever. We, the people, know little of the truth. One would think the more informed were not more settled in their opinions: for General Howe's retreat, after advancing towards Washington, produced despair; the taking of one post has given confidence. So much fluctuation begets a thousand reports. It is now said at once, that we are to hire fifteen thousand Russians for next campaign, and that we are treating for peace by the mediation of France. If you ask me what I believe—nothing but what is past—and perhaps have not heard a quarter of that. In one thing alone all that come from America agree, that the alienation from this country is incredible and universal; so that, instead of obtaining a revenue thence, the pretence of the war, the conquest would only entail boundless expense to preserve it. The New World will at last be revenged on the Old.

My poor nephew remains in the same undecided state; sometimes furious, sometimes sullen. I prophesy no more about him than about America; but, one way or other, he will be a source of vexation to me. But one speaks, or ought to speak, with more indifference about future events, when the clock is going to strike sixty. Visions, and hopes, and prospects, are pretty playthings for boys. It is folly to vex oneself for what cannot last very long. Indeed, what can, even when one is young? Corydon firmly believes he shall be wretched for ever, if he does not marry Phillis. That misery can but last till she has lost her bloom. His eternal woe would vanish, if her nose grew red. How often do our griefs become our comforts! I know

what I wish to-day ; not at all what I shall wish to-morrow. Sixty says, You did not wish for *me*, yet you would like to keep me. Sixty is in the right ; and I have not a word more to say.

1791. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 8, 1777, late.

I HAD written great part of a letter, Madam, by snatches, as my hopes or fears predominated, and with twenty nothings that came across me, as my spirits rose : now I shall send none of it, as the nonsense would be out of season, and the black scale preponderates. But I don't make myself understood. Well, Madam, we had no letters by Tuesday's mail, for the wind was contrary. Our uneasiness increased on Friday's mail too not arriving. On Sunday morning I received a letter from Paris, but could learn nothing from Trent. All yesterday my anxiety was extreme. It was not till late in the evening I learnt that the letters from Trent come by the Flemish post, and that two mails from Flanders were due ; they are arrived and bring a very bad account indeed ! Poor Lady Laura received a favourable letter from her mother of the 21st, but one of the 26th from the Duke's surgeon says his Royal Highness was relapsed, and so very bad, that it was thought he would be dead in four hours, though they should have some hopes if he did not go off by that time. I think he did weather that crisis, for no messenger is come ; and had these letters arrived on Friday or Saturday, as they should have done, we should now be comforting ourselves on having gained three days without a messenger. I do not see why we may not equally presume, since the wind alone is the cause that we are alarmed so late. However, every relapse increases the peril, and the blow seems almost inevitable.

I have passed a most terrible evening amidst Lady Dysart and my poor girls: and I doubt it is only the beginning of sorrows—but you shall not be grieved with the details. I had, as I hope you think, answered your Ladyship's last in mine that I don't send, but at present it is impossible to attend to anything but the distress in question: excuse me till I have a calmer moment. I must muster all the reason I have, when so many will want my assistance.

1792. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Wednesday night, late, Sept. 10, 1777.

IT is presuming a great deal upon your Ladyship's and Lord Ossory's friendship to trouble you with my distresses: at least I ought to communicate any gleam of joy too. By a mistake, the servants at Gloucester House sent us word yesterday morning that another mail was arrived, but had not brought one letter from Trent. This seemed decisive! every moment we expected the fatal courier! I ran down to the gate every time the bell rang, from not being able to wait for the blow. All yesterday and to-day passed in this dreadful suspense. No messenger arriving, my hopes could not help rekindling: at six I went to Hampton Court to communicate my ray of hope to my poor nieces; at seven, Mr. Hiel, the Duke's chief servant here, brought us a letter of the 29th that has put life into us; the pain in the leg was diminished, his Royal Highness had drunk a glass of wine and had spoken articulately. In short, he had survived for three days, after they had thought he would not last four hours; but I think I have better founded hope. My brother and I both flattered ourselves that the pain and swelling in the leg, which had been thought so alarming, were a new crisis of the distemper, and the flux not being returned, confirmed that opinion. I know some years ago

his terrible humour fell on his arm with a like swelling, and it was thought an amputation was necessary, but it soon went off. It will seem an age to Friday or Saturday, and the winds may be contrary again; but sufficient to the day is the evil thereof! Wait for the echo—my good old friend has proved faithful, when I thought even she could not articulate. There is a good deal more for her to contradict, for *my* echo, my oracle, never repeats what she hears, but the reverse. T'other echo lives at court, and always says *yes* with a broad Scotch accent. I must go to bed, for I am worn out. Good night, Madam.

1793. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 16, 1777.

I HAVE received your volume safely, dear Sir, and hurry to thank you before I have read a page, that you may be in no pain about its arrival. I will return it with the greatest care as soon as I have finished it; and at the same time will send Mr. Essex the bills; as I beg you will let him know.

I have no less reason for writing immediately, to thank you for the great confidence you place in me. You talk of *nonsense*; alas! what are all our opinions else? If we search for truth before we fix our principles, what do we find but doubt? And which of us begins the search a *tabula rasa*? Nay, where can we hunt but in volumes of error or purposed delusion? Have not we, too, a bias in our own minds; our passions? They will turn the scale in favour of the doctrines most agreeable to them. Yet let us be a little vain: you and I differ radically in our principles; and yet in forty years they have never cast a gloom over our friendship. We could give the world a reason that it would not like. We have both been

sincere, have both been consistent, and neither adopted our principles, nor have varied them for our interest.

Your labour, as well as I am acquainted with it, astonishes me. It shows what can be achieved by a man that does not lose a moment: and, which is still better, how happy the man is who can always employ himself. I do not believe that the proud prelate, who would not make you a little happier, is half so much to be envied.

Thank you for the print of Soame Jennyns. It is a proof of Sir Joshua's art, who could give a strong resemblance of so uncouth a countenance, without leaving it disagreeable.

The Duke of Gloucester is miraculously revived. For two whole days I doubted whether he was not dead. I hope fatalists and omen-mongers will be confuted; and that, as his grandfather broke the charm of the *second* of the name being an unfortunate prince, the Duke will baffle that which has made the title of Gloucester unpropitious. Adieu! dear Sir,

Yours most gratefully,

H. WALPOLE.

1794. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Tuesday evening, Sept. 16, 1777.

I HAVE got a delightful plaything, if I had time for play. It is a new sort of camera-obscura¹ for drawing the portraits of persons, or prospects, or insides of rooms, and does not depend on the sun or anything. The misfortune is, that there is a vast deal of machinery and putting together, and I am the worst person living for managing it. You know I am impenetrably dull in everything that requires a grain of common sense. The inventor is to come to me on

LETTER 1794.—¹ The machine called a delineator. *Walpole.*

Friday, and try if he can make me remember my right hand from my left. I could as soon have invented my machine as manage it; yet it has cost me ten guineas, and may cost me as much more as I please for improving it. You will conclude it was the dearness tempted me. I believe I must keep an astronomer, like Mr. Beauclerk, to help me to play with my rattle. The inventor, who seems very modest and simple, but I conclude an able flatterer, was in love with my house, and vowed nothing ever suited his camera so well. To be sure, the painted windows and the prospects, and the Gothic chimneys, &c., &c., were the delights of one's eyes, when no bigger than a silver penny. *You* would know how to manage it, as if you had never done anything else. Had not you better come and see it? You will learn how to conduct it, with the pleasure of correcting my awkwardness and *unlearnability*. Sir Joshua Reynolds and West have each got one; and the Duke of Northumberland is so charmed with the invention, that I dare say he can talk upon and explain it till I should understand ten times less of the matter than I do. Remember, neither Lady Ailesbury, nor you, nor Mrs. Damer, have seen my new divine closet, nor the billiard-sticks with which the Countess of Pembroke and Arcadia used to play with her brother Sir Philip; nor the portrait of *la belle Jennings*² in the state bedchamber. I go to town this day se'nnight for a day or two; and as, *to be sure*, Mount Edgumbe has put you out of humour with Park Place, you may deign to leave it for a moment. I never did see Cotehel³, and am sorry. Is not the old wardrobe there still? There was one from the time of

² Frances (d. 1731), daughter of Richard Jennings, of Sandridge, Hertfordshire; m. (1) George, Count Hamilton; (2) Richard Talbot, Earl (afterwards Duke) of Tyrconnell.

She was the sister of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough.

³ The old residence of the family of Edgumbe, twelve miles distant from Mount Edgumbe. *Walpole*.

Cain ; but Adam's breeches and Eve's under-petticoat were eaten by a goat in the ark. Good night !

1795. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1777.

I AM a little calm at present, and can tell what I say ; which would not have been the case last week. The changes in the Duke of Gloucester's condition have been so frequent and so unexpected, that I have been buffeted with every opposite agitation. On Saturday was sevensnight we heard his Royal Highness was in a very fair way. On the next Monday we were advertised that he was not likely to last four hours. The next day the post was said to be arrived, and to have brought no letters from Trent. Fatal as this seemed, the arrival of no messenger left a gleam of hope ; and next evening a favourable letter proved the mistake of the post having arrived sooner. Two more posts have brought more rapid accounts of amendment than one can scarce credit, if two circumstances did not solve the vast improbability. The humour had fallen on the lower parts, but with such violence as to bring on all the ordinary prognostics of immediate death ; and the Duke swelled from his groin to his foot. This vent cleared the bowels, and, as the stamina are still more vigorous than the royal humour, they seem to have conquered. For the swiftness of the recovery, it is owing to a very different cause ; to the removal of a malady that had co-operated with the disorder in the blood to bring on so violent and lasting an attack. In short, the King has sent his Royal Highness a most kind and brotherly letter, and the physicians are not to blame for not having prescribed a medicine that was not in their dispensary.

You may judge to what a skeleton such a conflict of body

and mind, in bed for thirteen weeks, and in so sultry a climate, must have reduced the Duke. They could hear the bones, they say, rattle in his skin. They speak of the Duchess's distraction, and the change in her person and beauty, with as much energy. Well! may we but see them here again! I will add no more; I have curbed myself to say so little. But what a week, and what transitions! It would make a tragedy to paint, as I did to myself, the Duchess travelling with the body, which the Duke had exacted of her, and with two infants, one just old enough to lisp daggers, and arriving in a succession of inns to be stared at, when she would wish herself in her grave; and returning to her own country to encounter mortification, triumph in her fall, and total uncertainty of her own fate, and of that of her children! It had been Agrippina again at Brundisium. No king ever had an opportunity of dispelling more woe, and his Majesty must taste the satisfaction he has given. It is the reverse of the tinsel, glory.

I know nothing else, and you cannot wonder that I have had room for nothing else. For above three weeks we have been totally in the dark about America. To tell you anything else would be repeating conjectures, which, though they fill up every cranny of the interstices of events, are most unsubstantial mortar, and rarely harden into part of the building.

My nephew remains quiet, but gives no prospect of amendment. What can one say of his mother?—no more than she says of him.

You are too reasonable about your own lameness to want any exhortation to patience. I am very weak on my feet too; but always say, when asked, I am well enough. The absence of pain is the pleasures of age. I wish you a great-nephew, because one ought to cultivate visions: it is true, disappointment is not quite so airy, nor vanishes like the

fumes that conjured it up. Pray don't imagine I am a philosopher but when I am pretty much at ease. Last week would give me the lie soundly, if I affected airs of stoicism. I pretend to nothing but to having chalked out for myself and pursued a plan of tranquillity; not because I had no passions, but because I knew the big ones, ambition and the chase of fortune, would produce more tempest in my passions than I could bear. The vexations my family have occasioned me were none of my seeking. I am neither so insensible as not to feel them, or not to try to remedy them. A little common sense is all the philosophy I possess; and, when the business of others does not torment me, nobody is more contented or can find more amusement than I. This place, my books and playthings, are empire enough for me; but, for amusing myself, I never was so totally debarred of that talent as this summer. I sigh to be my own master again; that is, idle. Adieu!

19th.

P.S. It is said a victualling-ship has brought an account of the Howes having attempted to cross the Delaware, in order to attack Philadelphia, and of Washington having marched and prevented them¹; and that on this disappointment they were sailed to Boston. On the other hand, the provincials are said to have abandoned Fort Edward². Few days will ascertain or contradict these events, and the papers will let you know.

A strange accident has happened. Lord Harcourt was missing the other day at dinner-time at his own seat³, and at last was found suffocated in a well with his head downwards, and his dog upon him. It is concluded that the dog

LETTER 1795. — ¹ Apparently a false report.

² On the Hudson, abandoned by

the Americans on the approach of Burgoyne.

³ Nuneham Harcourt, near Oxford.

had fallen in, and that the Earl, in trying to extricate him, had lost his poise and tumbled in too. It is an odd exit for the Governor of a King, Ambassador, and Viceroy. Another Ambassador has had a sad fall too: Count Virry⁴ is arrested at Susa, and ordered to present himself twice a day to the Governor. Madame⁵ has leave to go where she pleases. Whither can she go? or how not stay with her husband? The Prince of Masserano⁶ is set out, so ill, that I question if he will reach Calais.

1796. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1777.

You will not suspect my silence of idleness, I am but too apt to overwrite to any one, I have so perfect a friendship for. I only suppress my communicative disposition when I have nothing to say but what would grieve those that feel for me. The dangerous illness of the Duke of Gloucester, and the dreadful situation of my niece (and have not I another nephew besides!) have kept me in such agitation between hopes and despair, that I have had no peace or leisure. The present moment is very favourable; the Prince has mended amazingly; he has had a most gracious letter from the King, and so I hope I shall be at liberty to be a mortal again, and not anxious about princes.

This is not my immediate motive for writing, but to tell

⁴ Count Virry was son of one of the same title, who had been the Sardinian Minister in England, and was himself Ambassador in France. While in England he married Miss Speed, niece of Lady Cobham. *Walpole*.

⁵ The Countess Virry, who was supposed to be the cause of her husband's disgrace, as very intriguing, and to have invited him to keep up a secret correspondence

at Turin for making himself Prime Minister, which was discovered. Lord Shelburne, who was her friend, prevailed on the King to obtain their pardon of the King of Sardinia in 1783; about which time she died suddenly. She was one of the heroines of Mr. Gray's *Long Story*, and had a great deal of wit. *Walpole*.

⁶ The Spanish Ambassador in England; he died on Nov. 15, 1777.

you an amazing piece of news that I have this moment received from town. The dinner-bell had rung—where? at Nuneham. The Earl did not appear. After much search, he was found standing on his head in a well, a dear little favourite dog upon his legs, his stick and one of his gloves lying near. My letter does not say whether he had dropped the other. In short, I know no more.

I will behave as well as I can on all national misfortunes, and so I proceed to tell you, with a proper degree of affliction, that a victualler has come in who reports that the loquacious Howes have miscarried in their attempt on Philadelphia, and are believed to be gone to Boston; that the provincials have abandoned Fort Edward, it is said; and that, I suppose, the silent, modest, humble General Burgoyne has not yet finished his concise description of the victorious manner in which he took possession of it, for said description is not yet arrived. *My* dinner-bell rings, and lest my servants should suspect an accident, I must finish. Did you receive the *Gazettes Littéraires* which I left where you ordered a month ago?

1797. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 20, 1777.

THE Duchess's story is so interesting, Madam, that the sequel is as necessary as to a romance; but though I began it with warmth, the continuation will be told as coldly, as second parts by another hand. I am so apt to be hurried away by my first impressions, which is the mark of folly and a weak head, that I am determined never to know my own mind, till I have changed it. This may sound nonsense, but it contains a vast deal of meaning; the present solution of which is, that I shall simply relate facts, and leave their consequences to time.

The Duke's amendment has been most rapid—so rapid as to show that the humour in his blood was not the sole cause of his danger. As he began to grow better, he received a most gracious letter from the King, declaring his affection never had altered, never should. No wonder this revived his Royal Highness's spirits, and they advanced his recovery. The last letter from the surgeon his page says he by no means thinks the Duke yet out of danger. Others flattered themselves he would be able to begin his journey three days ago. I hope they will be in no hurry, nor move him till there is no risk of a relapse. We expect more letters to-day. It is a little your Ladyship's own fault, if I have talked too often on this subject.

The Howes have committed such another miscarriage, that for want of understanding it, great politicians conclude it is a *chef-d'œuvre* of finesse. The troops landed at Wilmington, on the high road to Philadelphia, and then re-embarked; and are believed to be sailed to Boston. One thing at least they forgot, which is, that some achievement is necessary before the meeting of Parliament, and the time presses, for there is no living any longer upon Ticonderoga and declamations, though as the provincials have abandoned Fort Edward, no doubt there is another cargo of bombast upon the road. No honour is given to Washington from this second retreat, because it is not certain he had any share in it, and because if he had, he probably would not accept a red riband. The fact is certain, though and for, it comes from Scotland.

What a strange exit Lord Harcourt's! I am sorry for anybody's misfortune, though I cannot dislike to see Lord Nuneham earl: it is an addition to my concern for the poor father, as in all probability he perished by trying to save his dog. You know how that must touch *me*.

There has been a more dreadful accident to an inhabitant

of Twickenham, and yet I am not very perfect in it. A son¹ of Lord Hawke, who lodged here, returning from town at midnight on horseback, met a post-chaise that ran against him. The driver, trying to check his horses, elevated the pole, and it rushed full into Mr. Hawke's body, who died in an hour in great agonies. The mystery is, that he lived here with a woman to whom he is supposed to be privately married, and therefore went here by the name of Captain Smith. Not being known, his name (which name I don't know) was found in his hat, and they fetched the poor woman to him.

Have not I sent you here great food for an evening at a shooting-party, Madam? My gazettes will take leave to repose till they have another crop: for if Lord Suffolk and Lord Holderness now get the long-contested Garters, it will not be worth putting you to the expense of three-pence.

1798. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 21, 1777.

THIS is but a codicil to my last, but I forgot to mention in it a new discovery that charms me more than Harlequin did at ten years old, and will bring all paradise before your eyes more perfectly than you can paint it to the good women of your parish. It will be the delight of your solitude, and will rival your own celestinettes. It is such a perfecting of the camera-obscura, that it no longer depends on the sun, and serves for taking portraits with a force and exactness incredible; and serves almost as well by candlelight as by day. It is called *the delineator*, and is invented within these eighteen months by a Mr. Storer, a Norfolk man, one of the modestest and humblest of beings. Sir Joshua Reynolds and West are gone mad with it, and it will be their own

LETTER 1797.—¹ Hon. Chaloner Hawke, third son of Lord Hawke.

faults if they do not excel Rubens in light and shade, and all the Flemish masters in truth. It improves the beauty of trees,—I don't know what it does not do—everything for me, for I can have every inside of every room here drawn minutely in the size of this page. Mr. Storer fell as much in love with Strawberry Hill as I did with his instrument. The perspectives of the house, which I studied so much, are miraculous in this camera. The gallery, cabinet, round drawing-room, and great bedchamber, make such pictures as you never saw. The painted glass and trees that shade it are Arabian tales. This instrument will enable engravers to copy pictures with the utmost precision: and with it you may take a vase or the pattern of a china jar in a moment; architecture and trees are its greatest beauty; but I think it will perform more wonders than electricity, and yet it is so simple as to be contained in a trunk, that you may carry in your lap in your chaise, for there is such contrivance in that trunk that the filbert in the fairy tales which held such treasures was a fool to it. In short, it is terrible to be threescore when it is just invented; I could play with it for forty years; when will you come up and see it? I am sure you will not go back without one.

I fear I was a little indelicate about Lord Harcourt's death, but I am so much more glad, when I am glad, than I can be sorry, when I am not, that I forgot the horror of the father's exit in my satisfaction at the son's succession; like the two universities, my congratulations to the reigning sovereign are much more hearty than my *luctus* for the departed one. I leave it to Lord Holderness and Lord Suffolk to pretend they are sorry that they have a competitor less for the Garter.

Are not you content with Lord Abingdon's¹ pamphlet?

LETTER 1798.—¹ Willoughby Bertie (1740–1799), fourth Earl of Abingdon. His pamphlet was called *Thoughts on*

Mr. Burke's Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol on the Affairs of America.

are you not more? are you not glad he has so well puffed away Burke's sophistries? Who would have thought of this little David? I am sure I should not have been surprised if I had seen him knocking down a blackbird with a sling; my Lord's Grace of York will not be pleased.

As I am got far enough from the paragraph about Lord Harcourt, may I ask if you do not feel a little satisfaction in the idea of our meeting at Nuneham? I am sorry I am threescore upon that account too; at that age one has not a vast many reasons for wishing to live long, but as loss of friends is the great bitter of old age, it is equally reasonable to like to enjoy their happiness. I am sure Lord Nuneham will have been exceedingly shocked; he is all good nature, and was an excellent son, and deserved a fonder father. I hear Mrs. Montagu made a high-flown panegyric two days ago on the late Earl. The poor man had not an idea; but Bishop Hurd dined at the same place, and I suppose she thought it necessary for a muse to sing the praises of all royal governors and preceptors. It was at Cambridge's; I was asked to dine there, but excused myself, for I have no pleasure in laughing at people, and am only weary when they are acting affected parts.

P.S. I recollect that they were the *Mémoires de Bachaumont* and not the *Gazettes Littéraires* that I sent you last: did you receive them?

1799. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1777.

I RETURN your MS., dear Sir, with a thousand thanks, and shall be impatient to hear that you receive it safe. It has

amused me much, and I admire Mr. Baker¹ for having been able to show so much sense on so dry a subject. I wish, as you say you have materials for it, that you would write his life. He deserved it much more than most of those he has recorded. His book on the Deficiencies of Learning is most excellent, and far too little known. I admire his moderation, too; which was extraordinary in a man that had suffered so much for his principles. Yet they warped even him, for he rejects Bishop Burnet's character of Bishop Gunning² in p. 200, and yet in the very next page, gives the same character of him. Burnet's words are, 'he had a great confusion of things in his head, but could bring nothing into method': pray compare this with p. 201. I see nothing in which they differ, except that Burnet does not talk so much of his comeliness as Mr. Baker.

I shall not commend *your* moderation, when you excuse such a man as Bishop Watson³. Nor ought you to be angry with Burnet, but with the witnesses on whose evidence Watson was convicted. To tell you the truth, I am glad when such faults are found with Burnet, for it shows his enemies are not angry at his telling falsehoods, but the truth. Must not an historian say a bishop was convicted of simony, if he was? I will tell you what I have heard was said on the appearance of Burnet's *History*, by one whose testimony you yourself will not dispute—at least you would not in anything else. That confessor said, 'Damn him, he has told a great deal of truth, but where the devil did he learn it?' This was Saint Atterbury's testimony.

LETTER 1799. — ¹ Rev. Thomas Baker (1656-1740), antiquary. His Life was written by Horace Walpole at Cole's request. See *Works* of Lord Orford, vol. ii. p. 341.

² Peter Gunning, D.D. (1614-1684), Bishop of Chichester, 1669-75; of

Ely, 1675-84.

³ Thomas Watson, D.D. (1637-1717), Bishop of St. Davids, 1687-99. In the latter year he was found guilty of simony and deprived of his see.

I shall take the liberty of reproving you, too, dear Sir, for defending that abominable murderess Queen Christina—and how can you doubt her conversation with Burnet? You must know there are a thousand evidences of her laughing at the religion she embraced. If you approve her, I will allow you to condemn Lord Russel and Algernon Sidney. Well, as we shall never have the same heroes, we will not dispute about them—nor shall I find fault, when you have given me so much entertainment: it would be very ungrateful, and I have a thousand obligations to you, and want to have more. I want to see more of your MSS. They are full of curiosities, and I love some of your heroes, too. I honour Bishop Fisher, and love Mr. Baker.

I have found very few errata indeed, and have corrected a few with a pencil: all are very trifling. In p. 2, last line but one, *Originial* is written for *Original*; and in p. 6, line 7, of the copy of verses, *lyest* for *lyes*; in p. 10, line 17, *authentic* probably for *unauthentic*.

In p. 200 you are a little mistaken. The late King of France was not silent from rule, but shyness: he could scarce ever be persuaded to speak to entire strangers.

If I might choose, I should like to see your account of the persons educated at King's—but as you may have objections, I insist, if you have, that you make me no word of answer. It is, perhaps, impertinent to ask it; and silence will lay neither of us under any difficulty. I have no right to make such a request; nor do now, but on the foot of its proving totally indifferent to you. You will make me blame myself, if it should a moment distress you, and I am sure you are too good-natured to put me out of humour with myself; which your making no answer would not do.

I enclose my bills for Mr. Essex, and will trouble you to send them to him.

I again thank you, and trust you will be as friendly free with me, as I have been with you. You know I am a brother monk in everything but in religious and political opinions. I only laugh at the Thirty-nine Articles, but abhor Calvin as much as I do the Queen of Sweden: for he was as thorough an assassin.

Yours ever,
H. W.

P.S. As I have a great mind, and, indeed, ought, when I require it, to show moderation, and when I have not, ought to confess it: which I do: for I own I am not moderate on certain points; if you are busy yourself and will send me the materials, I will draw up the life of Mr. Baker; and if you are not content with it, you shall burn it in Smithfield. In good truth, I revere conscientious martyrs of all sects, communions, and parties. I heartily pity them, if they are weak men. When they are as sensible as Mr. Baker, I doubt my own understanding more than his. I know I have not his virtues; but should delight in doing justice to them; and, perhaps, from a man of a different party, the testimony would be the more to his honour. I do not call myself of different principles; because a man that thinks himself bound by his oath can be a man of no principle if he violates it. I do not mean to deny but many men might think K. James's breach of his oath a dispensation from theirs; but, if they did not think so, or did not think their duty to their country obliged them to renounce their King, I should never defend those who took the new oaths from interest.

1800. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 28, 1777.

I FLATTER myself my zeal will not appear too prompt in assuring your Lordship and Lady Harcourt of the part I take in your late terrible shock¹. I wished to express it the first moment, but trusted you both know me too well to doubt of what I felt for you. I still write in pain lest I should be importunate, and beg you will not trouble yourself to answer me, as all I mean is to show that I never can be insensible to anything that affects you.

It may be some satisfaction to your Lordship to know that every letter brings better accounts of the Duke of Gloucester. I will answer for the Duchess, that she is too sensible of your Lordship's friendship not to share with me in all I have felt for you. I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard, &c.

1801. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 29, 1777.

I PROMISED to have nothing to say for some time, Madam, and have had nothing but the old resource of the weather. I must make *amende honorable* to our summers, for though they arrive *à la macaroni* three months too late, they come in Eastern pomp and with southern gales, as if they were part of the riches we gather in India. I did not use to love September, with its betweenity of parched days and cold long evenings, but this has been all lustre and verdancy: I am sorry it is at its end.

The Howes are gone the Lord knows whither, and have carried the American war with them, so there is

LETTER 1800.—¹ The sudden death of Lord Harcourt's father.

nothing to say on that head, which is a great drawback on correspondence in the *shooting* season. General Burgoyne has had but bad sport in the woods.

The Bishop of Exeter, my niece, and Miss Keppel have been with me for two or three days, and the Dysarts and Waldegraves have come to us all day, so I have been an old patriarch, as far as an uncle can be so. The weather and my young nieces made the gallery very splendid, for Miss Keppel¹ is a glorious creature, and handsomer than any of her cousins.

I beg to know by the first courier whether Charles Fox is author of a copy of verses to Poverty², attributed to him in the *Annual Register*. I never heard of them before.

I was in town on Tuesday, and bought a new pamphlet that pleases me exceedingly. It is called *An Unconnected Whig's Address to the Public*. It comprehends in a very short way the chief points in the American contest. The author seems a good deal more attached to the Marquis³ than he pretends to be, but there is a great deal of truth, and not the less for the contempt it expresses of that mulish cart-horse George Grenville.

This letter is all rags; but I cannot help it. I have really nothing to say, and, as every post confirms the Duke's amendment, my mind is easy; and when nothing is poured into it, nothing will come out of it. I own there are a great many wheels within, but they stand still, like the waterworks at Versailles, if not set in motion on some particular occasion.

I know nothing of poor Mrs. Hawke⁴, as I have seen none of our village this week. At first they said she was gone

LETTER 1801.—¹ Anna Maria, eldest daughter of Dr. Frederick Keppel, Bishop of Exeter, and great-niece of Horace Walpole; m. (1790) Hon. William Stapleton, son of Sir Thomas Stapleton, fifth Baronet, and brother

of sixteenth Baron Despencer.

² See *Ann. Reg.* 1776, p. 224.

³ Probably the Marquis of Rockingham.

⁴ See letter to Lady Ossory of Sept. 20, 1777.

mad, and then I heard Lord Hawke had sent for her. I don't know if either is true.

The new Duke of Norfolk's son is to be called Earl of Surrey, not of Arundel. This is to my mind, though it will be a paltry Earl of Surrey. The old Duke⁵ has left everything with the title (except 3,000*l.* a year to Harry Howard⁶, who probably will be Duke, and 2,000*l.* a year to Lord Stourton's⁷ son, a great nephew; and they were not Howard estates), and has tied up his drunken heir so that he cannot remove a picture. He has given him, too, a family estate in Norfolk, repurchased from Lord Petre. To Lady Smith⁸, who lived with him twenty years, he gives a trumpery annuity of fourscore pounds a year, as if she were his old coachman! I remember the present Lord Pomfret, when his mother thought she had paid all his debts and discovered still more, wrote to her that he could compare himself only to *Cerberus*, who, when one head was cut off, another sprung up in its room. This was a very new piece of mythology. The house of Howard is not a bit like the old story of *Cerberus*, *alias* the *Hydra*, for so many of their heads were cut off formerly that it looks as if they never would have a head worth wearing on their shoulders again.

1802. TO ROBERT JEPHSON.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 1, 1777.

To confer favours, Sir, is certainly not giving trouble: and had I the most constant occupation, I should contrive to find moments for reading your works. I have passed

⁵ Edward Howard, eighth Duke of Norfolk; d. Sept. 20, 1777.

⁶ Henry Howard (d. 1842), of Corby Castle, Cumberland.

⁷ William Stourton (1704-1781), sixteenth Baron Stourton. His only son, Hon. Charles Philip Stourton,

succeeded him as seventeenth Baron.

⁸ Hon. Mary Clifford (d. 1797), daughter of fourth Baron Clifford, of Chudleigh, and wife of Sir Edward Smythe, fourth Baronet, of Acton Burnell, Shropshire. Lady Smythe was a niece of the Duke's wife.

a most melancholy summer, from different distresses in my family; and though my nephew's situation and other avocations prevent my having but very little time for literary amusements, I did not mean to debar myself of the pleasure of hearing from my friends. Unfortunately, at present, it is impossible for me to profit of your kindness; not from my own business, but from the absence of Mr. Garrick. He is gone into Staffordshire to marry a nephew, and thence will pass into Wales to superintend a play that is to be acted at Sir Watkin Williams's. I am even afraid I shall not be the first apprised of his return, as I possibly may remove to town in expectation of the Duchess of Gloucester, before he is at home again. I shall not neglect my own satisfaction; but mention this circumstance, that you may not suspect me of inattention, if I should not get sight of *your* tragedy so soon as I wish.

I am, Sir, with great regard.

1803. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 2, 1777.

I AM a little uneasy, dear Sir, at not hearing that you have received your precious volume. I sent it, as you ordered, to the Queen's Head in Gray's Inn Lane yesterday was sevensnight, and my own servant carried it, and they assured him you would receive it the next day. With it I troubled you with a little parcel for Mr. Essex. As he promised me to come hither the beginning of this month, I am in hopes he is coming, and will bring me word of your having received your book. I should be out of my wits if you had not.

Yours ever,

H. W.

LETTER 1803.—Not in C.; printed in the 4to (1818) ed. of the Letters

to Cole; now printed from original in British Museum.

1804. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Oct. 5, 1777.

You are exceedingly good, and I shall assuredly accept your proposal in the fullest sense, and to ensure Mrs. Damer, beg I may expect you on Saturday next the 11th. If Lord and Lady William Campbell will do me the honour of accompanying you, I shall be most happy to see them, and expect Miss Caroline¹. Let me know about them, that the state bedchamber may be aired.

My difficulties about removing from home arise from the consciousness of my own weakness. I make it a rule, as much as I can, to conform wherever I go. Though I am threescore to-day, I should not think that an age for giving everything up; but it is, for whatever one has not strength to perform. You, though not a vast deal younger, are as healthy and strong, thank God! as ever you was: and you cannot have ideas of the mortification of being stared at by strangers and servants, when one hobbles, or cannot do as others do. I delight in being with you, and the Richmonds, and those I love and know; but the crowds of young people, and Chichester folks, and officers, and strange servants, make me afraid of Goodwood, I own. My spirits are never low; but they seldom will last out the whole day; and though I dare to say I appear to many capricious, and different from the rest of the world, there is more reason in my behaviour than there seems. You know in London I seldom stir out in a morning, and always late; and it is because I want a great deal of rest. Exercise never did agree with me: and it is hard if I do not know myself by this time; and what has done so well with me will probably suit me best

LETTER 1804.—¹ Miss Caroline Campbell, eldest daughter of Lord William Campbell. *Walpole*.

for the rest of my life. It would be ridiculous to talk so much of myself, and to enter into such trifling details, but *you* are the person in the world that I wish to convince that I do not act merely from humour or ill humour; though I confess at the same time that I want your *bonhomie*, and have a disposition not to care at all for people that I do not absolutely like. I could say a great deal more on this head, but it is not proper; though, when one has pretty much done with the world, I think with Lady Blandford, that one may indulge oneself in one's own whims and partialities in one's own house. I do not mean, still less to profess, retirement, because it is less ridiculous to go on with the world to the last, than to return to it; but in a quiet way it has long been my purpose to drop a great deal of it. Of all things I am farthest from not intending to come often to Park Place, whenever you have little company; and I had rather be with you in November than in July, because I am so totally unable to walk farther than a snail. I will never say any more on these subjects, because there may be as much affectation in being over-old, as folly in being over-young. My idea of age is, that one has nothing really to do but what one ought, and what is reasonable. All affectations are pretensions; and pretending to be anything one is not, cannot deceive when one is known, as everybody must be that has lived long. I do not mean that old folks may not have pleasures if they can; but then I think those pleasures are confined to being comfortable, and to enjoying the few friends one has not outlived. I am so fair as to own, that one's duties are not pleasures. I have given up a great deal of my time to nephews and nieces, even to some I can have little affection for. I do love my nieces, nay like them; but people above forty years younger are certainly not the society I should seek. They can only think and talk of what is, or is to come; I certainly am more disposed

to think and talk of what is past: and the obligation of passing the end of a long life in sets of totally new company is more irksome to me than passing a great deal of my time, as I do, quite alone. Family love and pride make me interest myself about the young people of my own family—for the whole rest of the young world, they are as indifferent to me as puppets or black children. This is my creed, and a key to my whole conduct, and the more likely to remain my creed, as I think it is *raisonné*. If I could paint my opinions instead of writing them—and I don't know whether it would not make a new sort of alphabet—I should use different colours for different affections at different ages. When I speak of love, affection, friendship, taste, liking, I should draw them rose colour, carmine, blue, green, yellow, for my cotemporaries: for new comers, the first would be of no colour; the others, purple, brown, crimson, and changeable. Remember, one tells one's creed only to one's confessor, that is, *sub sigillo*. I write to you as I think; to others as I must. Adieu!

1805. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 5, 1777.

THERE is nothing so unfortunate as to be a philosopher and a wise man, and a reasoner, and to know what can and cannot be done. If invention had not preceded demonstration, we should by this time have understood the whole system of the universe, but have thought it impossible to alter or improve anything in our world. This is my opinion, and you may confute it by argument if you please. I who have a sovereign contempt for Euclid, and Newton, and Locke, and admire nothing but original genius, and hold that everything will be found out at last, as flying, living for ever, &c., trust to none of my senses, having seen Jonas

perform what I did not believe, when I saw, and heard Le Texier be a dozen persons at once. In short, it is a joke to say anything is impossible. The delineator does perform wonders; and though from my own immachinality I can do little or nothing with it, which has abated something of my enthusiasm, you, who will be able to work wonders with it, are to blame to contest its possibilities. As I tell you I don't know how to manage it, you may swear I cannot describe or give directions for conducting it. It cost me ten guineas, and I believe they are thrown away, for in a twelvemonth it will certainly be brought to greater perfection. In one point you are very right, one must be as motionless as Lord Abercorn, or the least vibration of the features spoils the portrait. In good truth, though I stared like the mob at the witchery of this new instrument, yet if it had not been so mysteriously involved in a box, I am not sure it would have surprised me more than any reflection painted on a diminishing mirror. The child has had his plaything broken to see what it was made of, and is weary of it; however I think it will answer admirably for taking the insides of buildings, and near prospects, and statues, and vases, and be of great help to engravers, and it does serve without the sun.

Lord Harcourt has given away at least fifty thousand pounds to his daughter and younger son. I hold it very right not to heap all on heirs apparent; and yet loving the new Earl, and not caring a straw for the brother and sister, my concern for the father is not at all augmented. I had too the same reason that you hint at for being glad our friend is in possession. He had told me his intentions for you, but not knowing whether he had mentioned them to you, I was trusty you see, and did not divulge them even to you,—but it was a charming thought, and I hope the well will not be stopped up.

You ask the history of Burgoyne the Pompous. He is a natural son¹ of Lord Bingley, who put him into the entail of the estate, but when young Lane came of age the entail was cut off. He ran away with the old Lord Derby's daughter², and has been a fortunate gamester. Junius was thought unjust, as he was never supposed to do more than play very well. I have heard him speak in Parliament, just as he writes; for all his speeches were written and laboured, and yet neither in them nor in his conversation did he ever impress me with an idea of his having parts. He is however a very useful commander, for he feeds the *Gazette* and the public, while the Howes and the war are so dumb.

I have read the *Unconnected Whig*, and recommend him to you; he does not waste words like the unmerciful hero of the last paragraph. It is a short, clear, strong picture of our present situation and its causes. I see no fault in it, but its favour for the Rockinghams, the most timid set of time-serving triflers that ever existed; why should not he dine with his Grace³? Do not all Lord Rockingham's politics begin and end with dinners? Is not decency their whole wisdom? when they shunned Wilkes, could they avoid the Archbishop? I would lay a wager that if a parcel of schoolboys were to play at politicians, the children that should take the part of the opposition would discover more spirit and sense. The cruellest thing that has been said of the Americans by the court, is, that they were encouraged by the opposition. You might as soon light a fire with a wet dish-clout. Adieu.

LETTER 1805.—¹ This does not seem to have been the case. The *Dictionary of National Biography* describes him as the 'only son of Captain John Burgoyne, a man of fashion, who died in the rules of the King's Bench, and grandson of Sir

John Burgoyne, Baronet, of Sutton Park, Bedfordshire.'

² Lady Charlotte Burgoyne was the sixth daughter of eleventh Earl of Derby; she died in 1776.

³ The Archbishop of York.

1806. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 8, 1777.

I WILL never believe in impulses more; no, for I tore open the sacred box with as much impatience and as little reverence as Lady Barrymore could have done if she expected a new coiffeur from Paris. No holy *frisson*, no involuntary tear warned me that there was but a piece of paper between my sacrilegious fingers and the most precious relics¹ in the world. Alas! Why am not I a Gregory or a Boniface, and possess treasures enough to found a Casa Santa over the invaluable offering your Lordship has sent me. You enriched my museum before; you have now enriched me, for who is not rich, who possesses what the world cannot buy? You have done more, my Lord; you have given me a talisman that will for ever keep off Macpherson and evil spirits from entering my dwelling; you have shown generosity, too, in the highest sense, for you have given me what I know you value so much. I have seriously kissed each spur devoutly, and think them more lovely than Cellini's bell. You could have bestowed your bounty on no man living who could worship it more, nor is there any man living whom I should not envy the possession except General Washington. If he *gains his spurs* I think I could cede them. Thanks are poor, words could ill express my gratitude. The muse of the *Dispensary* would alone be capable of doing justice to your Lordship, as she did to the hero who wore these inestimable trophies.

One grief mixes with my transports. How could Ireland suffer the removal of her Palladium? does she not expect a host of toads, locusts, Scots, and every venomous insect

LETTER 1806.—¹ The spurs worn by William III at the battle of the Boyne; presented to the first Earl

Harcourt when Viceroy of Ireland. They were now given to Horace Walpole by his son, the second Earl.

in swarms on her coast? or is it not a mark of her degeneracy?

To some new clime, or far more distant sky,
O friendless and forsaken Virtue fly!

Do not expect, my Lord, that I should talk but poetry and enthusiasm. What day ever secured so much felicity, prevented so much mischief, as that festival on which these spurs were worn? Allowing credibility to legends, and sanctity to relics, what was the merit of martyrs but to themselves, what obligation was it to the world that they did not like to go to the devil? and why should we hoard up their teeth or their bones against the resurrection, when they would know where to find them wherever they were? In short, Saint William is my patron, his spurs are the dearest treasure of my museum, and your Lordship's letter shall never, while I have breath, be separated from them; yet obliged as I am, I shall think your Lordship and Lady Harcourt heretics if you do not both, at least once a year, make a pilgrimage to kiss the spurs. How can I say how much I am, &c.

P.S. Your Lordship's letter is dated Sunday, yet I received it only to-night, Wednesday.

1807. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 8, 1777.

WRITE to Sir George¹ about my own writings!—sure, Madam, you do not think I would for the world! What in the name of fortune could I write but affectation and false modesty?—and then he writes again, and is more civil; and I then protest I cannot spell my own name; and then—and then, I am in for a new correspondence. I beg to be excused.

LETTER 1807.—¹ Sir George Macartney.

I have time to write to nobody but on business, or to a few that are used to my ways, and with whom I don't mind whether I stand on my head or my heels. I beg your honour's pardon, for you are one to whom I can write comfortably, though I know you keep my letters; and it is, I must say, no small merit or courage that I still continue to write to you, without having the fear of sense before my eyes; but since neither Aristotle nor Bossu have laid down rules for letters, and consequently have left them to their native wildness, I shall persist in saying whatever comes uppermost, and the less I am understood by anybody but the person I write to, so much the better. St. Paul is my model for letter-writing, who being a man of fashion, and very unaffected, never studies for what he shall say, but in one paragraph takes care of Timothy's soul, and in the next of his own cloak.

However, though I will not engage with him in person, I must beg your good Ladyship to assure Sir George, I mean Lord Macartney, how very sensible I am of his partiality to me; which at least I will never forfeit, for you may safely take your Bible oath to him that I have entirely forsworn being an author. *Quod scripsi, scripsi*; and the things must shift for themselves; but the clock has struck threescore; and if I have not written very foolishly, I will take care that I will not. My outward man is so weak and shattered, that in all probability the inward has its share in the *délabrement*; but as of that I can be no judge myself, and as I am sure nobody will tell me, it is rather wiser not to risk exposing myself. The catalogue of my collection will be no more worth reading than one of Christie's auction-books, and the prints are not yet half finished. Lord Macartney shall have one as soon as any man; he has always been kind to me; I have a very sincere regard for him, and particularly for

his infinite good nature, which I value in him, and in anybody, more than their parts. I rejoice in his good fortune, especially as it is due to his amiable qualities, for what is so glorious as to have the governed reward their governor²! The gratitude of a whole people is the noblest of all epitaphs.

As your Ladyship is so punctual in answering my questions, it is not seemly that I should be less exact. Nay, I shall imitate you so servilely, that my answers will be individually the same as yours—*I don't know*. I neither know whether Lord Harcourt's dog broke its heart, nor whether their Royal Highnesses of Cumberland are going to part. The French mystery that you say is not tellable, I suppose implies that his Majesty's first surgeon has had a hand in the future Dauphin. Truly, I thought that any indecency relative to divinity or government might be told, if accompanied with proper gravity. I have heard the late Lord Lyttelton discuss points of midwifery with the solemnity of a Solon. I don't mean that I am curious for the particulars. Louis XIII was made to believe that he had begotten two sons, though he never knew how; and if his successor has been persuaded that the talisman is removed, I have no doubt but the Queen will convince him that she is as fruitful, as the good of the monarchy requires. *En attendant*, and with all due respect for Lady Clermont's *intelligence*, I have little faith in conceptions that have been so long immaculate.

You ask when will American news come? A cargo is come, and if you are a sound courtier, Madam, you will believe every tittle, though it comes from Margate, which is not exactly the side of our island nearest to America. What is more strange, is, that though every one of our generals has gained a separate victory, every one of them

² Lord Macartney was at this time Governor of the Caribbean Islands.

is too modest to have sent any account of it. However, one captain of a sloop happened to be at the very point and moment of intelligence when all the accounts arrived at New York. In London, I hear, there are very contradictory letters. I am assured too that an officer is arrived, but the *Gazette* was so afflicted for the Margravine Dowager of Bareith, that it forgot to let us know what he says. In fine, it is believed that General Howe was on his march to Philadelphia; all the rest is thought to be hartshorn for the stocks and the lottery tickets. Don't you begin to think, Madam, that it is pleasanter to read history than to live it? Battles are fought, and towns taken in every page, but a campaign takes six or seven months to hear, and achieves no great matter at last. I dare to say Alexander seemed to the coffee-houses of Pella a monstrous while about conquering the world. As to this American war, I am persuaded it will last to the end of the century; and then it is so inconvenient to have all letters come by the post of the ocean! People should never go to war above ten miles off, as the Grecian states used to do. Then one might have a *Gazette* every morning at breakfast. I hope Bengal will not rebel in my time, for then one shall be eighteen months between hearing that the army has taken the field and is gone into winter quarters.

My nephew, George Cholmondeley³ (for I am uncle to all the world), dined here to-day, and repeated part of a very good copy of verses from Sheridan to Mrs. Crewe. Has your Ladyship seen them? I trust they will not long retain their MS.-hood.

³ George James Cholmondeley (d. 1830), son of Hon. and Rev. Robert Cholmondeley, second son of third

Earl of Cholmondeley, and great-nephew of Horace Walpole.

1808. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 15, 1777.

I THANK you much, dear Sir, for the sight of the book¹, which I return by Mr. Essex. It is not new to me that Burnet paid his court to the other side in the former part of his life: nor will I insist that he changed on conviction, which might be said, and generally is, for all converts, even those who shift their principles the most glaringly from interest. Duke Lauderdale, indeed, was such a dog that the honestest man must have been driven to detest him, however connected with him. I doubt Burnet could not be blind to his character, when he wrote the dedication. In truth, I have given up many of my saints; though not on the accusations of such wretches as Dalrymple and Macpherson: nor can men so much their opposites shake my faith in Lord Russell or Algernon Sidney. I do not relinquish those that sealed their integrity with their blood, but such as have taken thirty pieces of silver.

I was sorry you said we had any variance. We have differed in sentiments, but not in friendship. Two men, however unlike in principles, may be perfect friends, when both are sincere in their opinions, as we are. Much less shall we quarrel about those of our separate parties; since very few on either side have been so invariably consistent as you and I have been; and therefore we are more sure of each other's integrity, than that of men whom we know less and who did vary from themselves. As too you and I are only speculative persons, and no actors, it would be

LETTER 1808.—Wrongly dated by C. Oct. 19.

¹ Cole's prefatory note on this letter is as follows:—'Mr. Essex going to Strawberry Hill to examine the workmen's bills, I sent Bp.

Burnet's *Vindication of the Church of Scotland*, with the dedication in it to Duke Lauderdale: when he returned to Cambridge he brought me the book and in it the following letter.'

very idle to squabble about those that do not exist. In short, we are, I trust, in as perfect good humour with each other as we have been these forty years.

Pray do not hurry yourself about the anecdotes of Mr. Baker, nor neglect other occupations on that account. I shall certainly not have time to do anything this year. I expect the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester in very few days, must go to town as soon as they arrive, and shall probably have not much idle leisure before next summer. It is not very discreet to look even so far forward, nor am I apt any longer to lay distant plans. A little sedentary literary amusement is indeed no very lofty castle in the air, if I do lay the foundation in idea seven or eight months beforehand.

Whatever MSS. you lend me, I shall be very grateful for. They entertain me exceedingly, and I promise you we will not have the shadow of an argument about them. I do not love disputation, even with those most indifferent to me. *Your* pardon I most sincerely beg for having contested a single point with you. I am sure it was not with a grain of ill humour towards you; on the contrary, it was from wishing at that moment that you did not approve those I disliked—but even that I give up as unreasonable.

You are in the right, dear Sir, not to apply to Masters for any papers he may have relating to Mr. Baker. It is a trumpery fellow, from whom one would rather receive a refusal than an obligation.

I am sorry to hear Mr. Lort has the gout, and still more concerned that you still suffer from it. Such patience and temper as yours are the only palliatives. As the bootikins have so much abridged and softened my fits, I do not expect their return with the alarm and horror I used to do; and that is being cured of half the complaint. I had scarce

any pain last time, and did not keep my bed a day, and had no gout at all in either foot. May not I ask you if this is not some merit in the bootikins? To have cured me of my apprehensions is to me a vast deal, for now the intervals do not connect the fits. You will understand that I mean to speak a word to you in favour of the bootikins, for can one feel benefit, and not wish to impart it to a suffering friend? Indeed I am

Yours most sincerely,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1809. TO ROBERT JEPHSON.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 17, 1777.

MR. GARRICK returned but two days ago, Sir, and I did not receive your tragedy¹ till this morning; so I could only read it once very rapidly and without any proper attention to particular passages; though, even so, some struck me as very fine.

You have encouraged me rather to criticize than flatter you; and you are in the right, for you have even profited of so weak a judgement as mine, and always improved the passages I objected to. Indeed, this is not quite a fair return, as it was inverting my method, by flattering, instead of finding fault with me; and a critic that meets with submission is apt to grow vain, and insolent, and capricious. Still as I am persuaded that all criticisms, though erroneous, *before* an author appeals to the public, are friendly, I will fairly tell you what parts of your tragedy have struck me as objectionable on so superficial a perusal.

In general, the language appears to me too metaphoric; especially as used by all the characters. You seem to me

LETTER 1809.—¹ *The Law of Lombardy.*

to have imitated Beaumont and Fletcher, though your play is superior to all theirs. In truth, I think the diction is sometimes obscure from being so figurative, especially in the first act. Will you allow me to mention two instances?

And craven Sloth, moulting his sleekless plumes,
Nods drowsy wonder at th' adventurous wing
That soars the shining azure o'er his head.

I own I do not understand why Sloth's plumes are sleekless; and I think that nodding wonder, and soaring azure, are expressions too Greek to be so close together, and too poetic for dialogue. The other passage is—

The wise should watch th' event on Fortune's wheel,
and the seven following lines. The images are very fine, but demand more attention than common audiences are capable of. In *Braganza* every image is strikingly clear.

I am afraid I am not quite satisfied with the conduct of your piece. Bireno's conduct on the attack on the Princess seems too precipitate, and not managed. It is still more incredible that Paladore should confess his passion to his rival; and not less so, that a private man and a stranger should doubt the Princess's faith, when she had preferred him to his rival, a prince of the blood and her destined husband; and that without the smallest inquiry he should believe Bireno was admitted privately to her apartment, when on her not rejecting him, he might have access to her openly. One cannot conceive her meaning in offending her father by refusing so proper a match, and intriguing with the very man she was to marry, and whom she had refused. Paladore's credulity is not of a piece with the account given of his wisdom, which had made him admitted to the King's counsels.

I think, when you bestow Sophia on Paladore, you forget

that the King had declared he was obliged to give his daughter to a prince of his own blood; nor do I see any reason for Bireno's stabbing Ascanio, who was sure of being put to death when their treachery was discovered.

The character of the Princess is very noble and well sustained. When I said I did not conceive her meaning, I expressed myself ill. I did not suppose she did intrigue with Bireno; but I meant that it was not natural Paladore should suspect she did, since it is inconceivable that a princess should refuse her cousin in marriage for the mere caprice of intriguing with him. Had she managed her father, and, from dread of his anger, temporized about Bireno, Paladore would have had more reason to doubt her. Would it not too be more natural for Bireno to incense the King against Paladore, than to endeavour to make the latter jealous of Sophia? At least, I think Bireno would have more chance of poisoning Paladore's mind, if he did not discover to him that he knew of his passion. Forgive me, Sir, but I cannot reconcile to probability Paladore's believing that Sophia had rejected Bireno for a husband, though it would please her father, and yet chose to intrigue with him in defiance of so serious and extraordinary a law. Either his credulity or his jealousy reduce Paladore to a lover very unworthy of such a woman as Sophia. For her sake I wish to see him more deserving of her.

You are so great a poet, Sir, that you have no occasion to labour anything but your plots. You can express anything you please. If the conduct is natural, you will not want words. Nay, I rather fear your indulging your poetic vein too far, for your language is sometimes sublime enough for odes, which admit the height of enthusiasm, which Horace will not allow to tragic writers. You could set up twenty of our tragic authors with lines that you could afford to reject, though for no reason but their being too

fine, as in landscape-painting some parts must be under-coloured to give the higher relief to the rest. Will you not think me too difficult and squeamish, when I find the language of *The Law of Lombardy* too rich?

I beg your pardon, but it is more difficult for you to please me than anybody. I interest myself in your success and your glory. You must be perfect in all parts, in nature, simplicity, and character, as well as in the most charming poetry, or I shall not be content. If I dared, I would beg you to trust me with your plots, before you write a line. When a subject seizes you, your impetuosity cannot breathe till you have executed your plan. You must be curbed, as other poets want to be spurred. When your sketch is made, you must study the characters and the audience. It is not flattering *you* to say, that the least you have to do is to write your play.

1810. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 18, 1777.

I AM sensibly obliged, my dear Lord, by your great goodness, and am most disposed to take the gardener you recommend, if I can. You are so good-natured you will not blame my suspense. I have a gardener that has lived with me above five-and-twenty years; he is incredibly ignorant, and a mule. When I wrote to your Lordship, my patience was worn out, and I resolved at least to have a gardener for flowers. On your not being able to give me one, I half consented to keep my own; not on his amendment, but because he will not leave me, presuming on my long suffering. I have offered him fifteen pounds a year to leave me, and when he pleads that he is old, and that nobody else will take him, I plead that I am old too, and that it is rather hard that I am not to have a few flowers, or a little

fruit as long as I live. I shall now try if I can make any compromise with him, for I own I cannot bear to turn him adrift, nor will starve an old servant, though never a good one, to please my nose and mouth. Besides, he is a Scot, and I will not be unjust, even to that odious nation; and the more I dislike him, the less will I allow my partiality to persuade me I am in the right. Everybody would not understand this, and the Scotch none of them; but I am sure your Lordship will, and will not be angry that I dally with you. I know how strong my prejudices are, and am always afraid of them. As long as they only hate they are welcome, but prejudices are themselves so much Scots, that I must not let them be my *friends* and govern me. I will take the liberty of letting you know, if I can persuade the serpent that has reduced my little Eden to be as nasty and barren as the Highlands, to take a pension and a yellow ribbon.

Lady Harcourt or your Lordship may frisk or vagary anywhere separately: I shall not be alarmed, nor think it by choice. Nay, if it were, where could I either mend yourself? I have so high an opinion of Miss Fauquiere¹, that, with all her regard for your Lordship, I believe you are the last man from whom she would bear to hear a gallantry. So you see, my Lord, how awkwardly you set about mischief. It is plain you are a novice, and have no talent for it, and therefore I advise you as a friend, not to attempt what would not become you: you are like a young tragic author, that meaning to draw a politic villain, makes him so very wicked, and lay such gross traps, that they would not catch an elephant. One laughs at his tragedy, but loves his heart. I am sure Miss Fauquiere agrees with

LETTER 1810.—¹ Jane Georgiana, daughter of William Fauquier, of Hanover; m. (1787), as his second

wife, George Venables-Vernon, second Baron Vernon, first cousin of Earl Harcourt; d. 1823.

me in desiring to remain the confidants of the two perfect characters of the drama.

Your Lordship's most devoted,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1811. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Oct. 24, 1777.

YOUR letter's date made it still more welcome than their predecessors. I wish myself with you without envy, and think of Nuneham with more pleasure than I dare tell Lord Harcourt. I am delighted too with the prospect of seeing you so soon. My letter's date tells you why I do not instantly obey you. I am here and must be so some days, and the delineator is locked up at Strawberry, or I hope you do not think I am so selfish as to prefer a plaything to your amusement. I will send it the moment I return merely to satisfy you, for Mr. Storer has already improved his idea so much, as to obviate I believe most of your objections. He is making me another, and honestly offered me to change it for me—and he has made a stand to it too, that remedies many inconveniences; but that I have not got yet, nor just now can I attend but to the present occupation.

The Duke and Duchess arrived yesterday. His R. H. is and looks better than I expected, not pulled though pale; his leg is still swelled and he is lame, but it has not opened; and his voice is strong and spirits good. The Duchess looks in health, but is much leaner and looks older. I have not seen them a moment alone, for they have not been a moment alone; all I know is, the Duke has written to ask when. The answer was not come half an hour ago. It is decent I should stay two or three days; and then if I was great enough to be proud of

lowering myself, I should say, I shall return to my plough. No, nor am I one of those, who, though so great, ought to be sent to plough.

I am much obliged to you for your offering, yet though I like the occasion of its becoming a relic, I cannot accept it. Lord Harcourt has given me the glorious and immortal spurs of King William; can I receive his uncle's boot-heel¹ into the same sanctuary! when you want to be a Cardinal, you shall present it to his Grace of York, or to any of the *et ceteras* that you do not see from Nuneham.

Pray tell Lord and Lady Harcourt that I have been a perfect courtier for them, and said everything in the world, and am commanded to return everything in the world. I was impatient lest all England, and still more, all Scotland, should be beforehand with me in addresses; one Englishman offered one this very morning—*mais attendez-moi sous l'orme*. There we shall talk more at our ease.

1812. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Oct. 26, 1777.

IT is past my usual period of writing to you; which would not have happened but from an uncommon, and indeed, considering the moment, an extraordinary dearth of matter. I could have done nothing but describe suspense, and every newspaper told you that. Still we know nothing certain of the state of affairs in America; the very existence where, of the Howes, is a mystery. The General is said to have beaten Washington, Clinton to have repulsed three attacks, and Burgoyne to be beaten¹. The second alone is credited. Impatience is very high, and

LETTER 1811.—¹ Mason offered this relic of Charles I to Horace Walpole, stating that it had been preserved in his family ever since that

King lost it before the gates of Hull.

LETTER 1812.—¹ No decisive news from America reached England until Dec. 1.

uneasiness increases with every day. There is no sanguine face anywhere, but many alarmed ones. The pains taken, by circulating false reports, to keep up some confidence, only increase the dissatisfaction by disappointing. Some advantage gained may put off clamour for some months: but I think, the longer it is suspended, the more terrible it will be; and how the war should end but in ruin, I am not wise enough to conjecture. France suspends the blow, to make it more inevitable. She has suffered us to undo ourselves: will she allow us time to recover? We have begged her indulgence in the first: will she grant the second prayer?

The Duke of Gloucester is arrived. *That* is miraculous. He is almost well, and *that* is less surprising. Mr. James finds his face plumper than at Rome: he is certainly not leaner, nor yellow, though very pale; and his voice shows his lungs are good. In short, the remainder of his illness is in his right leg; which is still swelled, and very lame when he stands too much, as he is too apt to do. The Duchess has more symptoms of what she has suffered than his Royal Highness; and as she is much fallen away, and even shrunk, her face looks much older, which must necessarily happen till her skin fills up again. The Princess Sophia is a fine child, though less pretty than she was. The Prince a pretty boy. If there is anything more to tell you, it is yet to come.

Lord Orford seems to be growing childish, which is the most eligible state for him, as the safest: but I depend on nothing. The events that I shall probably see are sufficient at my time of life, without dipping into a futurity that may be nothing to me.

You have heard of the inundation at Petersburg². That

² In the preceding September. It was caused by a violent storm, which raised the waters of the Neva far

above the ordinary level. Many houses were destroyed and trees torn up.

ill wind produced luck to somebody. As the Empress had not distressed objects enough among her own people to gratify her humanity, she turned the torrent of her bounty towards that unhappy relict the Duchess of Kingston, and ordered her Admiralty to take particular care of the marvellous yatch that bore Messalina and her fortune. Pray mind that I bestow the latter Empress's name on the Duchess, only because she married a second husband in the lifetime of the first. Amongst other benevolences, the Czarina lent her Grace a courier to dispatch to England—I suppose to acquaint Lord Bristol that he is not a widower. That courier brought a letter from a friend to Dr. Hunter, with the following anecdote. Her Imperial Majesty proposed to her brother of China to lay waste a large district that separates their two empires, lest it should, as it has been on the point of doing, produce war between them; the two empires being at the two extremities of the world, not being distance enough to keep the peace. The ill-bred Tartar sent no answer to so humane a project. On the contrary, he dispersed a letter to the Russian people, in which he tells them that a woman—he might have said the Minerva of the French litterati—had proposed to him to extirpate all the inhabitants of a certain region belonging to him, but that he knew better what to do with his own country: however, he could but wonder that the people of all the Russias should still submit to be governed by a creature that had assassinated her husband.—Oh, if she had pulled the Ottoman by the nose in the midst of Constantinople, as she intended to do, this savage would have been more civilized. I doubt the same rude monarch is still on the throne, who would not suffer Prince Czernichew to enter his territories, when sent to notify her Majesty's *hereditary* succession to her husband; but bade him be told, he would not receive an ambassador from a murderess. Is

it not shocking that the law of nations, and the law of politeness, should not yet have abrogated the laws of justice and good sense in a nation reckoned so civilized as the Chinese? What an age do we live in, if there is still a country where the crown does not take away all defects! Good night!

1813. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Oct. 28, 1777.

THE Ursulines of Trent seem to have prayed for more than the Duke's life, for he is not emaciated nor yellow; and though one sees he has been ill, his voice is strong and his spirits good, and nothing remains of his distemper but a swelled leg; and that is decreased since his arrival. The Duchess retains more traces of her sufferings; is much leaner, and looks older, though not so much as I expected. Nothing is settled about his going to court. Pray remember, Madam, that these are stars in eclipse, or I would not talk of them, for it is very vulgar to be interested about princes and princesses.

I know no more of America than the ministers do. It is not quite fashionable to talk of that. The tone is, just to ask with an air of anxiety, if there is anything new, and then to be silent. A general has a fine opportunity now, for if he was to reduce a pigeon-house, I believe the King would go to St. Paul's to hear a *Te Deum*. The accession-day was not full, and those that came are gone again. The town is as empty and dull as Newmarket between the meetings. The only event I have heard since I arrived is Lady Melbourne's being brought to bed of two girls at seven months, and they are both dead; but *she* had secured a son first. Oh yes, the Czarina has acknowledged the Duchess of Kingston, and taken as much care of her in her yacht, in

the inundation, as tender King James did of his dogs and his trunk when he was shipwrecked in Scotland. This great princess has been rather uncivilly treated by her brother the Emperor of China. She proposed to him to lay waste (a modern way of making peace) the country that separates their empires, lest they should quarrel for it. His Tartar Majesty did not send so much as a card in return; but he did write to all the Russians, I don't know by what post, to tell them that a woman, *soi-disant* Empress of Russia, had proposed to him to depopulate a country belonging to him, but that he knew better what to do with it. Strange ignorance to suppose that inhabitants enrich a country! In conclusion, his Majesty expresses his surprise that so great and wise a nation as the Russians should still submit to be governed by a creature that murdered her own husband: and yet we call the Chinese a polished nation! Mercy on us, if crowned heads were to tell one another their own!

I shall return to Strawberry in a day or two, where I think I cannot have less to tell your Ladyship than from the capital.

1814. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Oct. 30, 1777.

I MUST confess, Madam, I cannot agree with your Ladyship in thinking Miss Barley, and Miss Oats, and Miss Rawhides, and Miss Beesom, and Miss Soap, &c., so much in the wrong for not consorting with a dancing-master's daughters. The young ladies above named are of the best families in Ampthill, ancient gentry, that settled there before the Conquest. I know a dancing-master's is reckoned a more liberal profession, and more likely to advance him to the Irish peerage. But does Mr. Kit pay in proportion to the

American war? Has he signed any address for it? Will not people learn to dance, though we should never recover the colonies? By the good people of England, does not his Majesty mean his faithful gentry, yeomanry, and tradesmen of the kingdom? In his speech to Parliament does he ever think of dancing-masters and hair-dressers? Are they not aliens? Is his Majesty ever in their books? Or are the nobility, who are in debt to everybody else? Indeed, indeed, Madam, I approve the spirit of the young ladies; they feel themselves; and I dare to say could scratch out the eyes of every rebellious American on the face of the earth.

The post is come in from that part of the world, and Lord Howe and General Howe were, very well thank you! two months ago. General Washington has received a defeat in the City of London, and General Burgoyne on the banks of the Seine. The *Gazette* itself knows no more.

I do not know that the Duchess of D.¹ has been positively ill. She thought her nerves were much affected, but it proved to be only a disorder on her spirits, occasioned by her being tired of Chatsworth. She is much better since her removal.

I am ignorant of what Mr. Morrice got by his sister's death, and whether she has got anything. I have been a week in town without being a jot more informed in any one point, and therefore shall return to-morrow to my castle, whence, at least, my ignorance will be more excusable.

1815. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Monday night, Nov. 3.

ST. JOHN is a false prophet, and of the house of Bolingbroke; the angel of the Church of Philadelphia is a blind

LETTER 1814.—¹ The Duchess of Devonshire. amongst letters of Nov. 1779. (See *Notes and Queries*, July 7, 1900.)

LETTER 1815.— Misplaced by C.

buzzard, and cannot see a yard beyond his nose. A heathen Cupid, with a bandage over his eyes, is worth a hundred of such blundering cherubim, that, like bats, fly about in the dark, and take a farthing candle for the sun. There, my Lady, there's Washington beaten¹, and Philadelphia taken! Commend me to Revelations! If your angel would be seeing, why did not he put on his spectacles and hover over Arnold², who has beaten the vapouring Burgoyne, and destroyed his magazines? Carleton, who was set aside for General Hurllothrumbo, is gone to save him and the remains of his army, if he can. On Saturday night, not a minister but was packing up: yesterday morning, they ran about, shouting and huzzaing, like madmen!

Arlington Street, Tuesday, four o'clock³.

I wrote the above few lines last night, Madam, and then heard that no confirmation was come. I most humbly beg pardon of Monseigneur St. Michael, or St. Ithuriel, or St. George Fox, or whoever is archangel of Philadelphia, for too lightly crediting Bamber Gascoyne's⁴ or Port Glasgow's lies. I am this minute come to town, and find that the ship *Argo* is as much arrived as the sloop *Isis*, which turns out to be the *Asia*, which is a large ship that has been long

¹ Nov. 2, 1777. 'At daybreak an express arrived from Bamber Gascoigne, at Liverpool, with a *New York Gazette*, that was said to have come to Glasgow by a ship from New York. This *Gazette* said that a person from Howe's army had arrived there and brought an account of three actions between Howe and Washington, on the 11th, 12th, and 13th of September, in which Washington had been totally defeated, and his army entirely dispersed. Another ship had met the *Isis* at sea, and was told it was bringing *glorious news*. The ministers and courtiers received this news with transports

of joy, that did great honour to Washington.' (*Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 160.)

² Benedict Arnold (1741-1801), who took the chief part in forcing Burgoyne to surrender at Saratoga (Oct. 17, 1777). In 1780, having been discovered in an intrigue with the English general Clinton (to whom he had promised to give up the fort at West Point), he took refuge on an English man-of-war. He entered the English military service, and received the rank of Brigadier.

³ Hitherto printed as a separate letter.

⁴ M.P. for Liverpool.

on a cruise. *It is believed*, from two or three letters from New York, that Washington has been beaten⁵; yet nothing more is known of the action or its consequences; and as Howe has sent no account, it does not seem to be any great matter. The papers to-day are full of a resuscitation and victory of Burgoyne, which even the dates show to be manifest lies. It is doubted whether he will not have been forced to lay down his arms⁶.

I received your Ladyship's letter, with the extract of your *beau-frère's*⁷, this morning, and another short one this minute. I have not a moment's time to speak on either; but you may easily imagine all the sentiments the extract roused, and which wanted but a spark.

I must be excused, just now, from answering, or even thinking of, Mr. Selwyn's query about I don't know what. You have not told me where the letter is, nor to what admiral; and, to say truth, I am not sorry, for I never had less time to solve historic riddles of ages past.

If I learn anything certain by to-morrow night, I will certainly write again; your Ladyship and Lord Ossory must be anxious about Mr. F. and Lord Chewton, and I will neglect nothing that can tend to quiet your alarm; though, I must own, I doubt whether this whole history of Washington is not coined, to balance for a moment the destruction of Burgoyne's army, and the loss of Canada that may follow.

1816. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, Nov. 6, 1777.

Your Ladyship will be so well content with knowing that nothing ill happened to Mr. Fitzpatrick in a battle of

⁵ Apparently a reference to the battle of Brandywine, which took place in Sept. 1777.

⁶ Burgoyne surrendered to Gates

on Oct. 17, 1777.

⁷ Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, at this time serving with his regiment in America.

three days¹, that you will not repine at his having gathered no laurels in them. He really was not engaged any one of the three days, nor Lord Chewton neither; not that the latter was ill, or less from want of spirit in your *beau-frère*; but as neither of them have any *fanfaronnade* about them, they did not hot-headedly thrust themselves into more danger than their companions; and as General Washington was so easily beaten without a stroke being struck, Mr. Fitzpatrick and Lord Chewton could not acquire more honour than General Howe himself, who has been presented with a victory that he has not earned, and of which he probably will not hear this month.

In short, not only no confirmation is come of the New York *Gazette*, but the ministers say they have traced the two ships that brought the news to Liverpool and Glasgow, and have discovered that they were sent by Panchaud² on some stock-jobbing errand. If this is true, they have good reason to be peevish, for never were people more egregiously duped. I have not time to say more now, but I am happy to take off some anxiety from Amptill.

1817. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Nov. 7, 1777.

You will have seen in the papers, before you can receive this, such accounts of a total defeat of Washington, that you might wonder at my silence if I did not say a word: that word must be, that I very much doubt the fact; and, if it was known at New York so long ago as the supposed *Gazette* thence says, it would be wonderful, indeed, that General Howe should keep it a profound secret from the Government here, whom he might suppose a little in-

LETTER 1816.—¹ The battle of Brandywine, which began on Sept. 11, 1777.

² A banker in Paris.

terested to hear some good news or other after a long dearth.

The first breath of this report was said to come from France yesterday sevensnight. On Sunday morning early it was asserted as a fact by a New York *Gazette* arrived at Liverpool. On Tuesday I came to town, intending to write to you ; but, finding no confirmation come, I thought it prudent not to assert what I knew no better. From Tuesday to Friday night is a long interval on such an occasion ; and, though some still say they believe Washington beaten, they do not use, I observe, much stronger terms than *received a check*. One has heard of towns burnt to the ground, that have turned out to be a chimney on fire. In the meantime I tell you all I know, and I am not apt to believe more of things at such a distance.

Of what there is no doubt is, *the check*¹ Burgoyne *has received*, and the distress of his army, that the last accounts left in danger of being starved. There have been accounts of his recovering the blow, but I cannot find one person who believes that. In one word, it is a very serious moment ; and, without greater views, the misery of so many who have relations and friends both in Howe's and Burgoyne's armies is terrible. It is known that the latter had twenty-six officers wounded ; and as their names are not come, ten times the number may be suffering the worst anxiety. The distance of the war augments its horrors almost as much as its expense, and makes it grow every day more irksome.

I have often seen your friend Sir John Dick since the Duke's return, and he inquires most kindly after you.

I have no private news to send you of any sort. The town is still empty. I come now and then to see the Duke

LETTER 1817.—¹ Burgoyne surrendered to Gates at Saratoga on Oct. 17 1777.

and Duchess. He does not recover of his lameness, and in general I find people think he looks worse than it appears to me. She looks infinitely better than at her arrival, but *she* has a perfect constitution.

I see no prospect of an end to this American war, but from our inability to carry it on: and what can that produce but a war *from* France—I don't say *with* France; for where can we attack them if we lose America; and where are we to be attacked but in our own islands and the East Indies—which are not quite near enough to assist each other? There is no looking towards such a prospect.

If Burgoyne's army is destroyed, little force left in Canada, only seven thousand men in New York, Howe's army not increased by his tedious voyage, and three battles with Washington, if true—where are we to stamp and conjure up new armies? And what will less armies achieve, which such large ones have not compassed in three campaigns? We have lost Boston, have got New York, and perhaps Philadelphia. If the Americans have fought, they will fight. If they have not, can you make them? And can you conquer them without beating them? Can you maintain the country when you have conquered it? Will a destroyed country maintain your army? And can this country maintain or recruit it, when you can already get no recruits but from Germany? We are like Lord Holland paying the debts of his sons; he ruined himself, and left them beggars.

1818. TO ROBERT JEPHSON.

Arlington Street, Nov. 8, 1777.

THE justice you do me, Sir, in forgiving the liberty I have taken with you from sincere zeal for your glory, is still an

LETTER 1818.—Not in C.; reprinted from *Notes and Queries*, Aug. 6, 1870.

uncommon instance of a great poet's bearing to have his works criticized: and though true poets are not frequent, one that can endure the objections of a friend is a greater rarity, and displays as much the coolness of good sense as his writings the warmth of imagination. It was conviction of the torrent of the latter, though ignorant of the extent of the former, that made me presume to offer my opinion on your plans before you should let loose your poetry on the execution; thinking you could not be offended at objections to the design, though you might be displeased at disapprobation of any of your verses; and indeed liking them too much to be ready to wish them effaced myself. You have convinced me, Sir, that I neither understand the latitude of your patience, nor your good nature; and yet I have put both to the proof. I have ventured to try both to the utmost, nor reserved any criticisms in store.

You will be so good as to observe that there were but two faults I found: improbability in the conduct, and too figurative expression in the dialogue. You have obviated part of the former by the corrections you have condescended to make, and perhaps have condescended too much: for if I alone have made the observations, I am so far from attributing it, as you are so obliging to do, to more penetration, that I doubt it is rather owing to singularity or the peevishness of age,—and perhaps men who have a little reading, and some experience, are worse judges of a drama that is calculated for everybody than a more informed auditor. An infinitely greater man, Molière, trusted the feelings of his old housekeeper more than those of Boileau, another man, much greater—I can scarce venture to say than I: for what am I? to name myself at all, looks as if I had some pretensions to something. I assure you I only meant to prefer the housekeeper to myself, but arranged my words so awkwardly that, to my

great astonishment, I found myself *à côté de Boileau*. Yet I am not quite modest, nor possess your modesty, Sir. I am still a little obstinate on one point, I mean in general; and that is, metaphoric diction in tragedy; and forgive me once more if I do not submit to your argument in its defence, that Shakespeare's, Beaumont's, Fletcher's, and Massinger's pieces, though crowded with figures, are still tasted. I believe the most figurative passages in Shakespeare are not the most admired. Dr. Johnson goes much farther, far beyond truth, and says that that most sublime genius never attempted to be sublime without being bombast,—but indubitably Shakespeare is never so superior to all mankind as when he is most simple and natural. Recollect Constance, Arthur, Juliet, Desdemona, or Hotspur's mockeries of Glendower. What strikes one's soul with horror like Macbeth's account of the two grooms when he has murdered Duncan? The passage is foolishly ridiculed by Voltaire, because he is incapable of feeling that simplicity is the height of the sublime.

When he himself can his quietus make
With a bare bodkin:—

Henry IV's image of the cabin-boy *in a night so rude*, and Richard II's sensibility to his favourite horse being pleased with the load of Bolinbroke—are texts out of the book of nature, in comparison of which the works of all other writers in every language that I understand are to me apocryphal.

But to descend from enthusiasm, which seizes me whenever I name our First of Men, I think there is a plain reason why the metaphoric style of that age is not to be imitated now. In the first place allow me (and it is a question I must beg) that chastity of criticism was not known in that age. Therefore, representations were new; whatever the authors pleased to produce was thankfully accepted; and even the

most turgid and unintelligible passages of those writers, mouthed out emphatically by popular actors, are still received with applause by the multitude. Perhaps I suspect that the natural parts of their plays were what ensured to them permanent approbation. Be that as it may, the tragedies of the four you cite, Sir, were received with admiration, and have been handed down to us with that imprimatur. You will grant me that our language is altered since 1625, and many passages in the four were understood then, which are total darkness now—yet are repeated because they are familiar to our ears, though lost on our understanding. You will say I make no distinction between obsolete dictions and metaphor, but all I mean is, that obscurity, being accepted by prescription, cannot be cited as a precedent for any kind of obscurity that is new. Nor if fashion tolerated metaphoric language in that age, can it prove that it is the true taste. It is a general objection to tragedy, that it is an unnatural elevation of nature. Its sentiments are exaggerated; surely if those deviators from nature are amplified by the expression, tragedy wanders still further from its aim—the representation of the passions and conduct of mankind. Of late the world has been forced to accept a mezzo-terme, the *tragédie bourgeoise*. Kings, knaves, and heroines could not be persuaded to lower their style. Their etiquette would not allow them to be natural. We were forced to descend amongst ourselves, and seek nature where it grovelled yet. I am sensible that our language has not the charming and facile grace of the French for conversation. In dialogue (I do not mean theatric) we have never succeeded. Lord Shaftsbury meant to attain the majesty of Plato, missed his way, and found himself in the clouds. Yet, what is impossible to genius? *The Man of Mode*, *The Careless Husband*, and Vanbrugh, have shown that our tongue can

utter the genteelest language. *Jane Shore* is a perfect tragedy, both in conduct and language, though not a capital one. There are parts of *Oroonoko* and *The Fatal Marriage* worthy a disciple of Shakespeare. It would look like flattery to name *Braganza*; which I own, though I have again examined it very carefully, I prefer to *The Law of Lombardy*: yet, if not quite content with the latter, you may depend upon it I shall not let my objections be known. Mr. Garrick does not know them, to whom I have returned your play. My observations were those of a sincere friend. Were I insolent enough to think my sentiments a standard, I hope I am honest enough to conceal them but the more carefully. I have ever to my little power made the interests of your fame my own. I ventured my credit with you rather than act a base part, and applaud when I was not satisfied. You have accepted my duty like a man; and I shall willingly give my judgement as a critic if you are convinced that I am, Sir,

Your sincere friend,
HOR. WALPOLE.

1819. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Nov. 13, 1777.

I HAVE had nothing to add to my accounts, Madam, nor have now more than you will see in the papers.

There is come in a ship from Halifax, which is not next-door to Philadelphia, the captain of which was told by another captain from New York, that Sir W. Howe had had an engagement with Washington, and had the advantage; Washington having lost, some say, fifteen hundred men—some five hundred men. But the singular part of this story is, that captain of captains says the action passed on the 25th, and not the 11th, which does not prove

that the *New York Gazette* of the 29th was very authentic. In short, it is the house that Jack built, except that it loses a story in the hands of every new builder. Nobody knows what to make of such a cloud, which has occasioned as much reasoning, and consequently as much false reasoning as ever was heard.

What is believed is, that Captain Tollemache, Lady Bridget's husband, is killed in a duel at New York, by a Captain Pennington¹, on a foolish quarrel about humming a tune. There is strange fatality attends the house of Tollemache: two brothers² drowned and a third killed! My poor niece, Lady Dysart, who is all goodness and good nature, will be very unhappy, as she was about the last brother! But indeed if she can love the eldest, it would not be just to be indifferent to the others; though, except the second, I never heard much good of any of them. I know which is the worst.

I have seen George³ twice since his return from Amptill. You have done him a great deal of good; he was in spirits yesterday; this morning there was a little relapse. He is gone, I believe, to Lady Holland, but returns to-morrow, as his mother is come to town not in a good way.

I hope you saw and was delighted with the parody of Burgoyne's dispatch. I never saw more humour, nor better kept up. It is as much admired as it deserves. General Swagger is said to be entrenched at Saratoga, but I question whether he will be left at leisure to continue his Commentaries: one Arnold is mighty apt to interrupt him.

LETTER 1819.—¹ John Pennington, cr. Baron Muncaster, Oct. 21, 1783; d. 1813.

² Hon. George and Hon. William

Tollemache, drowned at sea in 1760 and 1776 respectively.

³ George Selwyn.

1820. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Nov. 26, 1777.

I AM quite ashamed, my dear Lord, to receive such a mark of your Lordship's too kind partiality in consulting my judgement rather than your own; nor have I any other way of answering it than by preferring your honour to my own prejudices, as I did, when I presumed to think that, had *they* sent, you ought to have gone to court. It is very vexatious to pay eighty guineas for a daub; but as I know your scrupulous punctuality in performing your duties, permit me to say that I think your regard for the person that bespoke the picture should preponderate; and that even paying for it, and then giving it away, distinguishes between your respect for your father, and your sensibility to the neglect shown to his memory.

May I add that there may even be in two or three years *two* reasons to *one* for your keeping the picture? Your Lordship must have heard a saying of your great grandfather, that had much wit in it—that grandfathers should love their grandsons, as the latter revenge their quarrel by wishing their fathers dead—do not *sons* then punish parents?

I wish you as rich as Cræsus, my dear Lord, but impatient as I am to see you call out all the beauties of Nuneham, I had rather see you dig in your own garden than not have you a *Harcourt sans reproche*; I mean that even Dr. Hunter should not be able to invent a blemish that would stick. The poor lady you couple with him can only repeat, not invent. My greatest ambition is to admire you, and prove myself, my good Lord,

Your Lordship's most sincere friend
and devoted servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1821. TO SIR HORACE MANN.,

Arlington Street, Dec. 4, 1777.

THIS letter will not be preceded by nine postilions blowing horns; but should steal into Florence as modestly as a Roman general, who at once hoped to obtain the honour of an ovation. The second part of my dispatch will only beg you not to despair of the republic.

After living a whole month upon a *New York Gazette*, and tired of asking if, *No news yet?* Sir William Howe's aide-de-camp arrived on the first: he confirmed the account of two, not three, engagements between the General and Dictator Washington. In the first¹, Howe certainly had the advantage; and in the second², so far, that Washington, having attacked him in his post, was repelled, and is retired into the Jerseys, the King having been restored to the sovereignty of Philadelphia. You are to believe that though Howe lost eleven hundred men, particularly Hessians, Washington suffered more: but even the *Gazette* does not enjoin you to suppose that the latter is totally defeated. On the contrary, for fear too small an army should effect too great things, you are authorized to figure the provincial army in the Jerseys as still consisting of 11,000 men; and there are a few reasons to think that it may now be as large as the Congress or the provinces, no longer checked, may please. Sir William delays the pursuit, as the passage of the Delaware is not yet clear. The Lord his brother is besieging a tough fort³, and has already lost a sixty-four gun ship and a frigate.

LETTER 1821. — ¹ The battle of Brandywine.

² The battle of Germantown, on Oct. 4, 1777.

³ Mud or Fort Island, near the

junction of the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers. The *Augusta* man-of-war and the *Merlin* sloop ran aground during an attack on the fort on Oct. 22, 1777.

General Clinton has marched to relieve or find Burgoyne, but was forced to be content with taking two forts⁴, and showing uncommon valour. The next paragraph will tell you why his expedition was unnecessary.

On Tuesday night came news from Carleton at Quebec, which indeed had come from France earlier, announcing the total annihilation (as to America) of Burgoyne's army. Carleton declares he has no *authentic* information; but from all the intelligence he can get, and which he believes, Burgoyne, after dispatching Colonel Fraser⁵ with 1,000 men to seek provisions, which whole body with their commander was cut off, fought desperately to extricate himself; but, numbers increasing and pouring upon him, he had been forced to lay down his arms, and the whole remaining army, which some say still consisted of 5,000, but probably were reduced much lower, surrendered themselves prisoners, and are to be transported to England, on parole of not serving more in America—no bad circumstance for us, if they were but here? Burgoyne is said to be wounded in three places; his vanquisher Arnold is supposed to be dead of his wounds.

You may imagine this occasions some consternation; but none at all, I assure you, in the Temple of Concord. Unless Croesus besieged the senate with an army of ingots, I do not believe there would be a deserter from the cause of *Sacra Fames*. There have been indeed warm skirmishes in both the Temples of Honour and Virtue, Lord Chatham himself heading the troops of the opposition⁶, but without making any impression. Lord George Germain has received several wounds from Charles Fox; and Burke and Wedder-

⁴ Forts Montgomery and Clinton, on the west bank of the Hudson river, taken by General Clinton on Oct. 6, 1777.

⁵ Brigadier-General Simon Fraser, youngest son of Hugh Fraser, of

Balnain, Inverness-shire, killed on Oct. 7, 1777, at Behmus Heights, near Saratoga.

⁶ The Opposition moved on Dec. 2 in both Houses for a committee to consider the state of the nation.

burn were on the point of a closer engagement ; but it was made up⁷. The Parliament is to be adjourned to-morrow till after the holidays.

What will be next, I, the most unwise of men, do not guess. Some, a little wiser, think the wisest could not tell what should be. The opposition, who, decried as they have been, have at least not been contradicted in their prophecies by events, think that, as Canada is left defenceless, and New York is not overcrowded with defenders, the whole force of New England, which is entire, as Burgoyne experienced, may march to Quebec, or join Washington, and besiege Clinton with as numerous an army as they choose to have. In that case, Sir William Howe must abandon Philadelphia, and march to the succour of New York.

You may be sure the uninformed expect that, as America is so near lost, the army will be recalled. You may guess, too, that I, who do not doat on France, nor desire a war at home, should not be sorry we had a little more defence ; but who will ask my advice, or take it ? We are, in fact, very near the end of the American war, but I doubt we are at the beginning of our troubles. Disgrace is the present chapter, and sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. If disappointment opens our eyes, it has, like a true friend, given us bitter but wholesome counsel. If obstinacy is mistaken for firmness, it will obtain at last, as it generally does, its genuine appellation.

I am sorry you are losing your nephew and Lady Lucy, and more sorry you continue troubled with lameness. Though I am a little younger, you must trust my greater experience. The gout will bear no contradiction. You must submit to what it gives, and what it leaves. I do not walk a mile in a twelvemonth, and suffer if I stand a quarter of an hour ; but what then ? There are chairs for

⁷ See the following letter.

us old folks, and in this age easy ones everywhere. Within these two months, sleep, which has been my constant support and food, has begun to grow coy. Can I wonder? At first I had a mind to find a cause; but I recollected that twenty years ago I should have said to myself, if a person of sixty complained, 'The poor soul does not consider it is threescore!' We must part with all at once, or see it slip away by degrees. We cannot even choose which; nor should know how to decide, if we might. I endeavour to take patiently everything as it comes. You have a better temper, and can do so more easily. The vision has been pleasant enough upon the whole to both of us. Thank God, it has been no worse! Let us, while we last, hope it will not be. If we combat age, by pretending to believe that its consequences are accidents that may be removed, we only deceive and torment ourselves, but find no remedy. Adieu!

1822. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Friday night, late, Dec. 5, 1777.

SEND for Lord Chatham! they had better send for General Washington, Madam—or at least for our troops back, which would be a little less disgraceful than having them returned on their hands. There is another express come to-day with the loss of Ticonderoga, which is very credible when there was no army left to defend it. I suppose Quebec will follow. General Howe must probably return to defend New York. *Sic transit gloria mundi!*

I must own I had not sorted my feelings into different drawers, and therefore cannot one day pull out one, and grieve for burning a town, or destroying a beautiful province; and the next day take out an assortment of compassion for an army that marched under such a savage proclamation as Burgoyne's. The accounts that are come, own that the

provincials have treated him and his fellow-prisoners with the utmost humanity. On the other hand, I must contradict myself, and do justice to General Clinton, who spared all he could when he took the two forts. We have been horribly the aggressors; and I must rejoice that the Americans are to be free, as they had a right to be, and as I am sure they have shown they deserve to be. I cannot answer for what our troops would have done, had they conquered; and less what the spirit would have done that sent them. Lord Chatham is an Irishman: he would recall the troops and deny the independence of the Americans. He is in the right to recall an army that cannot conquer it; but a country that will not be conquered, and that cannot be, is but in an odd sort of state of dependence. He seems to be afraid of their condescending even to trade with us. No, Madam, we do not want ministers that would protract our difficulties. I look on them but as beginning now, and am far from thinking that there is any man, or set of men, able enough to extricate us. I own there are very able Englishmen left, but they happen to be on t'other side of the Atlantic. If his Majesty hopes to find them here, I doubt he will be mistaken: it is not worth his while to change hands.

The debates have continued warm in the House of Commons. Charles Fox on Wednesday told Lord George he hoped to see him brought to a second trial. Burke having called Wedderburn Lord George's counsel, Wedderburn grew outrageous, told Burke he knew not how to behave with good manners, but he would be respected by him both in public and private. Burke went out of the House, and, they say, made a signal to Wedderburn to follow him; but their friends interposed, and it was made up. Yesterday Charles and the Attorney-General had high words that did not go so far. Lord Chatham was in the other House to-day, but I know nothing of what was done.

Mr. Acland¹ is not dead, but wounded; and his poor wife is gone to him at Saratoga, from Quebec.

I am grateful for your Ladyship's hint, and, indeed, did hope to be invited to keep my gambols at Amptill, which I do most steadfastly design; though I was alarmed last night with a swelled finger, but it is gone; and this evening it has snowed. However, I am not in a mood to be disheartened easily; and as your Ladyship's spirits seem to be affected with every sort of wind that blows, *my propriety* shall come and represent the necessity of submission to what one wishes, and endeavour to comfort you for the loss of everybody that you don't know.

Dec. 6th.

Thank you, Madam, for the extracts, which are sensible indeed. I have time to say no more of them. Yesterday was warm again in the Lords. The Earls of Chatham and Gower squabbled again on the Indians, and the former was in the wrong again. He talked of accusing my Lord of York² of his libel, and was not in the wrong. It looks as if we were to continue the war; but as it is tiresome to wait two or three months for a skirmish, we are to have a war with France, of which we can have news every day.

Pray return my compliments, Madam, to Lady Gertrude, and tell her I am impatient to kiss her, though I kissed a Princess last night that was my own flesh and blood—but is it *proper* to own so much?

LETTER 1822.—¹ Major John Dyke Acland married (1771) Lady Christiana Caroline Henrietta Fox, sixth daughter of first Earl of Ilchester. Major Acland was wounded and made prisoner on Oct. 7, 1777. Lady Harriet Acland made her way down the Hudson river in an open boat in order to join him in the enemy's camp. She was kept waiting during

the greater part of a night at the enemy's outposts, but ultimately succeeded in her object.

² William Markham, Archbishop of York, whose 'libel on the opposition' was contained in his sermon preached before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel on Feb. 21, 1777.

P.S. Sir Charles Bunbury declared off from the court on Thursday, and Lord Northington voted in the minority yesterday. These are the *ratifications* of misfortune.

1823. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Thursday night, Dec. 11, 1777.

I do not write, Madam, to tell you politics ; you will hear them better from Lord Ossory : nor indeed have I words to paint the abject impudent poltroonery of the ministers, or the blockish stupidity of the Parliament.

Lord North yesterday declared he should during the recess prepare to lay before the Parliament proposals of peace to be offered to the Americans! *I trust we have force enough to bring forward an accommodation.* They were his very words. Was ever proud insolent nation sunk so low! Burke and Charles Fox told him the administration thought of nothing but keeping their places ; and so they will, and the members their pensions, and the nation its infamy. Were I Franklin, I would order the Cabinet Council to come to me at Paris with ropes about their necks, and then kick them back to St. James's.

Well, Madam, as I told Lord Ossory t'other day, I am satisfied,—Old England is safe, that is, America, whither the true English retired under Charles the First:—this is Nova Scotia, and I care not what becomes of it.

I have just been at *Percy*¹. The four first acts are much better than I expected, and very animated. There are good situations, and several pretty passages, but not much nature. There is a fine speech of the heroine to her father, and a strange sermon against Crusades, that ends with a description of the Saviour, who died for our sins. The last act is very ill-conducted, unnatural, and obscure.

Earl Douglas is a savage ruffian. Earl Percy is converted by the virtue of his mistress, and she is *love and virtue* in the supreme degree. There is a prologue and epilogue about fine ladies and fine gentlemen, and feathers and buckles, and I don't doubt every word of both Mr. Garrick's, for they are commonplace, and written for the upper gallery. It was very moderately performed, but one passage against the *odious Scot* Douglas was loudly applauded, and showed that the mob have no pensions.

Our brave administration have turned out Lord Jersey² and Mr. Hopkins³, which will certainly convince all America and all Europe, that they are *not* afraid; though I saw one of their tools to-day who assured me they are,—nay, he said (and *he* is somebody) that if the Congress insists on the ministry being changed it must be. I do not believe the Congress will do them so much honour; but I answered, 'Sir, if the Congress should make that condition, it will not be from caring about it, but to make the pacification impossible. I do not believe they care much more for the opposition than for the administration; but they must know that the opposition could not, would not, grant terms, that this administration should refuse.'

Adieu, Madam! I am at last not sorry you have no son, and your daughters, I hope, will be married to Americans, and not in this dirty, despicable island!

1824. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Dec. 17, 1777.

THERE can be nothing more amiable or more just than your Ladyship's reproof to me for forgetting your *sons*¹.

² The Earl of Jersey was a Lord of the Bedchamber.

³ Richard Hopkins, Clerk Comptroller of the Board of Green Cloth.

LETTER 1824. — ¹ Lady Ossory's sons by her previous marriage; see the last paragraph of the preceding letter.

I could excuse myself more easily to Lord Ossory than to you; and, in truth, my mind is so narrow and contracted by all I have seen and see, that those I love occupy the whole remaining space; like a small map, only the chief rivers are set down, and not all the rivulets. It was this partial humour, and not what you are pleased to dignify with the name of *proper pride*, that made me so cold to the Earl Lord Ossory found with me. I just contrive to keep within the bounds of cool civility to those I do not wish to see. Mr. Beauclerk told me t'other day he wondered I received everybody that came to see me. I told him it was very little inconvenience, for those I was not glad to see found little encouragement to come often.

As I have no new news to send your Ladyship, for Captain Craig has only brought the confirmation of Burgoyne's capitulation, I should have deferred my apology for some days, were I not impatient to mention what interests me much, as it regards your Ladyship and our Lord. I called on Lady Holland last night, and thought she looked ill. I afterwards found Lady Payne at Lady Di's, and Mrs. Dixon, both whom I had seen with Lady Holland. They were both very uneasy about her. She has been blooded four or five times, and it was to be repeated this morning; and Lady Payne told me Dr. Warren is not quite satisfied with her case. Lady Payne wishes much to have her go abroad, but does not think she will be persuaded. In short, I promised to tell Lord Ossory her apprehensions, and I am sure he will be so good as not to take notice of my information, especially as it might alarm his sister herself. She is so delicate, that it is better to be too circumspect than the contrary.

Crawfurd is again confined with the gout, and ought to be closer confined. He has heard that Taaffe has been cured by Buzaglo², and sent for the former, who told him fairly

² Abraham Buzaglo (d. 1788), a Jew. He first attracted notice as

that Buzaglo had removed his gout in four hours, but said the operation would kill any man less strong. The remedy struck him, and he totally forgot the reasoning; and when I urged his debility, he vowed he had rather die, than have the gout. 'Oh,' said I, 'I shall not contest with you, for people often contradict one till they grow determined upon points, that at first they scarce laid any stress upon; and you shall not kill yourself only to confute me'—but he will have no more patience to be boiled to death, than with the gout; and when he has simmered half an hour, he will despair, and try the next quack he hears of.

You will please to tell me when you would have me to Ampthill. I cannot well be there before the middle of next week, but from that moment I am at your Ladyship's command for what part of the holidays will be most convenient to you, and shall not engage myself anywhere else till you have disposed of me. *Anywhere else* sounds magnificent, but really means nowhere but Park Place. I am too ancient to go about like morrice-dancers, to every house that is open at Christmas; nor but where they are so good as to have indulgence, and let me come away if I feel any menaces of the gout.

1825. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Tuesday morning, Dec. 23, 1777.

I HAVE just received a very good answer to my message; Lady Holland is much better. I will call on her myself before I come to Ampthill, which I propose shall be on Friday or Saturday—but man proposes, and fog disposes. If it is as dark as to-day or last Saturday, I shall not be

an inventor of heating apparatus. He then set up as a gout doctor, professing to cure by muscular exer-

cise only. He advertised extensively, and was considered a quack.

able to find my way. I was forced on Saturday to light a candle at eleven in the morning, in my room forwards, to read the newspapers; and it is not the breadth of a hair lighter this morning. If this Egyptian obscurity does not produce snow, I shall not mind it.

I know nothing, Madam, though we have so many affairs on our hands, that almost every sea and every wind might bring us news of our concerns. It is well we have heads so capacious and hearts so stout, as to hold all these matters, and not mind it, if the world tumbles to pieces about our ears!

I suppose you know Lady Louisa Leveson¹ is to marry Mr. Macdonald.

I have been at another new play, *The Roman Sacrifice*². It is the old story of Junius Brutus, without a tolerable line. I went to see it, as I had never seen Henderson, and thought I could judge him better in a new part; but either the part was so bad, or he wants to copy, that I should not have found out he was at all superior to all the other actors. Upon my word I have not a syllable more to say, and am your Ladyship's, &c.

1826. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Saturday morning.

It is so impossible for me, my dear Lord, to know what I shall have it in my power to do on Friday, that I believe the most respectful to your Lordship, which I certainly always mean to be, is to excuse myself for Friday next, though waiting on you and Lady Harcourt would be the

LETTER 1825. — ¹ Lady Louisa Leveson-Gower, eldest daughter of second Earl Gower; m. (Dec. 1777) Archibald Macdonald (1747-1826), third son of Sir Alexander Macdonald, seventh Baronet, of Sleat in Skye; knighted, 1788; cr. a Baronet, 1813;

Solicitor-General, 1784; Attorney-General, 1788; Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, 1793-1813.

² By William Shirley.

LETTER 1826. — Hitherto placed amongst letters of 1778.

most agreeable. The case is that I have been going to Ampthill these three days, but have been delayed by the danger of the poor Bishop of Exeter, of whom I every minute expect the worst news. Should I fortunately hear anything good, I shall go on Monday to Lord Ossory's for a week, as I have promised. If the Bishop should linger, his death may make it improper for me to dine abroad on Friday. Forgive my troubling your Lordship with so many circumstances, since it proves how much I wish to be always at your command, and how much I am afraid of laying you [under] any difficulty by my unavoidable uncertainty. If I am at liberty, I hope at least Lady Harcourt will allow me to pay my duty to her in the evening.

Your Lordship's most devoted,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1827. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Dec. 27, 1777.

THE misfortune has happened, Madam ; the poor Bishop died this morning. The Duchess¹ is gone to Windsor to try to bring her sister to town, who insists on staying there till he is buried, and every one of their windows looks on St. George's Chapel ! but I will not sadden your Ladyship with the distress I am witness to ! It is impossible for me to leave them at present, or my brother. Lady Laura², who had lived a great deal with the Bishop, and loved him like a father, is as afflicted as his own children—though they have additional cause to regret him. I have been so taken up with this calamity, that I have not had a moment to call on Lady Holland, of whom I am happy to hear such good accounts. I have not time to add a word more.

LETTER 1827.—¹ The Duchess of Gloucester.

² Lady Laura Waldegrave.

1828. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Monday evening, Dec. 29, 1777.

I PURPOSE, with your Ladyship's and Lord Ossory's good leave, to be at Ampthill on Friday, 2nd of next year. Do not stay dinner for me; I seldom get out early in the morning.

As I have seen nothing but my family these three days, I know not what has become of the world. The capture of Mud Island¹ is very improbable, like all ship-news, especially as no account is come since.

I shall call presently on Lady Holland, and I hope to bring you a very good account of her. I have heard that she looks much better. There is to be a gallery at Bedford House for Princess Amelia on New Year's Day. I hope Lady Louisa² does not return for it.

I must tell you, Madam, a charming speech of my niece, Lady Maria³. A few hours after the Bishop died, the Bishop of Oxford⁴ came to my brother where she was. Her aunt, Mrs. Clements, said to her, 'I am afraid you are shocked at seeing the Bishop.' 'No,' replied she, 'not as he is a Bishop: if he had been only Dr. Butler, I should have been shocked.' I assure you she says a thousand things as worthy of the *late* Lord Waldegrave.

1829. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Jan. 4, 1778.

THE period of a month is elapsed; and therefore, not to break through an ancient custom which I am not young

LETTER 1828.—¹ Mud Island was captured by the English on Nov. 15, 1777.

² Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick.

³ Lady Maria Waldegrave, Horace

Walpole's great-niece.

⁴ John Butler, D.D. (1717-1802), Bishop of Oxford, 1777-88; Bishop of Hereford, 1788-1802.

enough to be excused violating (though legislators often dispense themselves from observing their own laws), I begin a letter to you, not at all foreseeing with what it is to be filled. The distance of place, and the extreme taciturnity of the Howes, must have taught you a little not to expect events from America every day. Even Burgoyne has left himself nothing to say—till he arrives. We have lived a fortnight on the capture of Mud Island, though it is far from clear that it is yet taken. If, on the contrary, New York should be retaken by the provincials—but stay, I do not know they intend it,—it has a most slender garrison, so has Quebec; but Washington may think it a shorter way of terminating the war by overwhelming the army under Howe—if he can. In truth, I am no judge of what is most for their interest—but the Congress seem to know.

You must not suppose, though I make such short work of it, that it is the *language* here to sit down, and give America for lost. The ministers had, indeed, very near said so, and Lord North was to bring terms for peace after the holidays; *mais nous avons changé tout cela*, and nothing is talked of but raising regiments, and sending another army—I don't know whither, because, supposing a new army can be raised, which is a *postulatum*, it will be a little necessary to know whether we have New York, or Philadelphia, or Quebec; and though, probably, one or two of them—but I really do not know what I say, nor have I found anybody on whose sleeve I pin my faith in these affairs. We have had assertion, and prophecy, and confidence, and all have been brought to shame, and none of them are ashamed; and so I refer you to the chapter of accidents.

The Parliament, when it shall meet, is to go into a great inquiry, which, I conclude, will end in nothing at all, or, rather, not end. The talk of the day is, that France has

signed a treaty with the provincials, and the stocks look pale upon it; but all these rumours only fill up the chinks of time, and will be forgotten when great events happen. By *great events* I mean foreign war and domestic calamity. We are on the high road to both. The present moment is only like the half-hour at the theatre before the play begins: the galleries are riotous, pelt the candle-snuffers, or bawl for the overture; when the curtain is drawn up, nobody thinks but of the tragedy.

We have had a great misfortune in our family: the Bishop of Exeter is dead, who married my brother's eldest daughter. She is left with four children and a very small provision indeed; but Sir Edward has acted nobly, and gives up to her an estate at Windsor of eight hundred a year, and a house in town, and keeps her a coach. He has, indeed, been a most bountiful father always, and has not made his children wait for his death.

Lord Orford has been in a most hopeless way for above three months; but last week, though the weather was severe, he had a furious fit, which the faculty reckon more likely to indicate an interval of sense, than quiet and settled irrationality. I am about him as about the war: I let come what will, and do not pretend to augur.

Jan. 7th.

I have received yours of the 10th of last month. You will have learnt before now that the total defeat of Washington was converted into a total defeat of Burgoyne, and it is very much the opinion of the City that the American war will soon be turned into a French one; but I doubt France will stay till we have not a regiment left in the island, which you know would save a great deal of blood.

Don't trouble your head any longer about Lady Lucy's having a son; they are the happiest that have no children.

We are not content with having lost America; we shall

not have an army to defend England. Why does not Mrs. Anne Pitt return? She would find most people as mad as herself.

1830. TO THE EARL OF UPPER OSSORY.

January 8, 1777 [1778].

I WAS very sorry, my dear Lord, that it was too late to write to you last night when I heard the news, that I might immediately make you easy about your friends. It was past eleven when Mrs. Howe, at Lady Hertford's, received a note to tell her that Mud Island was taken *December 2nd*, and that only four men were killed and five wounded. This shows that the former accounts of the capture, and of the slaughter, were totally false. I know nothing more, but conclude the Americans had abandoned the fort, and very probably are gone to New York. The belief of a French war is far from decreasing.

Duke Hamilton¹ most assuredly marries Miss Burrell.

Lady George Germaine was given over yesterday; was rather better at night, but is not so to-day.

I say nothing about myself, for I am ashamed. The severe colds and fogs frighten me, and I doubt will bring the gout whether I stir or not: I have twice thought it actually come; but it uses me like a coquette that will not part with one, though she does not care for anything but the power. The gout, that can make conquests only of the aged, is still more jealous. I had promised myself a most comfortable week at Amptill, but I find that the few visions I had left must vanish like all the rest! A clock has struck that wakes one from dreams!

LETTER 1830.—Misplaced by C. amongst letters of 1777. (See *Notes and Queries*, July 7, 1900.)

¹ Douglas Hamilton (1756–1799), eighth Duke of Hamilton, m. (April

5, 1778) Elizabeth Anne, daughter of Peter Burrell, of Beckenham, Kent, from whom he was divorced in 1794.

P.S. After dinner.

I have now seen the office account. It says Mud Island was taken on the 15th of *November*; so I suppose the note to Mrs. Howe mistook the date of the letters for that of the surrender; but I am sure of what was in the note, for Lady Mary Coke read it twice with all her importance of accent. The Americans abandoned the fort² the night of the attack, leaving all their cannon and stores, and having lost, says the office, four hundred men. Lord Cornwallis, on the 10th, having passed the Delaware, and being joined by Sir T. Wilson³ with the troops from New York, attacked Red Bank⁴, which the provincials abandoned too, and left their cannon and stores; so, if you believe authority, they do nothing but supply the King's troops. Sir W. Howe intended to march immediately to Washington, who was at White Marsh⁵; but as his letters are dated *December* 1st, and he had taken the island on the 15th, his *immediately* had lasted a fortnight.

I have just received Lady Ossory's, but have not time to answer it.

1831. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Jan. 17, 1778.

I HAVE not written to you since you went, as I had nothing to tell you; and I write improperly now, when one is probably at the eve of having something to say, but the fish I have to fry is of another kind. Can it be true that you have an opera coming on the stage, and that you never mentioned it to me? Had I torn Orpheus piecemeal,

² On Mud Island.

³ Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, sixth Baronet (d. 1798), of Charlton, Kent, afterwards a Lieutenant-General.

⁴ In New Jersey, on Navasink Bay, taken possession of by the Eng-

lish on Nov. 17, 1777.

⁵ Fourteen miles from Philadelphia. Howe decided that Washington's camp was inaccessible, and retired into winter quarters at Philadelphia.

I could not be more unworthy of musical communication. Am I so untunable that I must not hear airs unless I can sing them? Yes, you have written an opera, and it is called *Sappho*, and I suppose Mrs. Montagu is to be first woman. Lord Strafford is my authority; and yet I can scarce think you would have been so basely unfriendly; if you have, I wish your celestinette may be broken about your ears, or that Lady Rockingham may desire a rehearsal at her own house in the morning, and make the poet and the whole orchestra wait till nine at night.

Knapton¹ is dying, but the promise to Sandby² is superseded, *de par le Roy*, because it dates from the Duke of Grafton.

General Howe has been to take another look at Washington, and passed eldest³ again. The town of Froome, concluding *Burgoyne* was a Frenchman by his name, made great rejoicings on his being taken prisoner.

I heard last night that Voltaire is dead⁴; now one may buy his works safely, as he cannot write them over and over again.

You shall not hear a word more from me till you clear yourself about the opera. Should it prove true, I shall never believe a syllable more about your idleness, nay, shall conclude that everything that appears is yours, and I am sure that will be full vengeance.

P.S. Pray did you write *The Roman Sacrifice*, the last new tragedy? It was detestable.

LETTER 1831.—¹ George Knapton, Keeper of the King's pictures. He died in Dec. 1778.

² Paul Sandby.

³ An allusion to Howe's failure to take any decisive action. The term is borrowed from the game of loo:— 'He who is eldest Hand hath the Privilege of passing by the Benefit thereof, that is, he hath the Advan-

tage of hearing what every one will say, and, at last, may play, or not play, according as he finds his Game good or bad. If the Eldest says he passes, the rest may chuse whether they will play, or no.' (*Compleat Gamester*, fifth edition, 1784, pt. ii. p. 18, under *Lue*.)

⁴ A false report.

1832. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Jan. 24, 1778.

I RECEIVED your act¹ late last night, and though I have run through it but once, I am impatient not only to pardon you, but thank you. I can forgive you anything but idleness; and music, which your words always are, has charms to soothe even me. The language is so harmonious, that I think as I did of Dryden's *Ode*, that it will be more melodious unset than when adapted. Yet if you can rival Dryden, Giardini cannot paragon Handel. I am, I know, a most poor judge of musical composition, yet may not I ask if Giardini possesses either force or simplicity? Your act is classic Athenian: shall it be subdi-di-di-vi-vi-vi-ded into modern Italian? but it is too late to ask that question.

I shall now mention a very few criticisms.

The language is so sweet, that my soul that loves *chiaroscuro* as a contrast, at least wants a little more sombre, and the place I would allot for it is Sappho's speech after the vision. The parts of Metastasio (I do not compare you down to him) that please me most are his long soliloquies of accompanied recitative in last acts; they give scope to the poet, the passions, the actress, and the composer. I would not have Sappho determine at once, but struggle with love, fear, hope, despair; and when she doubts obeying the god, thunder may mark his anger, and decide her; for she obeys a dream too suddenly, though classic times may justify her more than a modern would be justified.

As you are sublime in choruses, why have you only one in an opera,—in a Greek opera? They are simple, and yet give variety; sure a hymeneal chorus is necessary.

LETTER 1832.—¹ An act of Mason's lyrical drama *Sappho*, first printed in 1797.

I have an objection, which is odd, even to the parts I have *not* seen, but you hint (by Sappho in her female dress) at her being disguised as a man in a former act. Will not *that* be a little too characteristic, and give a handle to buffoonery in the learned part of the mob?

I have few verbal criticisms to make, though I could commend a thousand passages, particularly the two lines on Alpheus, and the exquisite first air. I am not quite pleased with *down, down, down*, as a little too artificial, and then *down* should not come in the very next line, and in a sense that is the very opposite to the former sense, and shows we express a precipitate fall and the softness of repose by the same sound.

I do not quite approve so forced an expression as *downcast tenderness*, and I cavil at

I *feel* that full, that heartfelt tenderness

That blesses those who never *felt* distress,

and would rather change *heartfelt*, which has a German sound. In the second line *felt* is most sonorous.

I have, literally but one more qualm. When Sappho dedicates her lyre, she says it is *far sweeter than the harp*. This methinks is too nice a distinction for a person in her situation to make, and fitter for a commentator's note than a woman on the point of destroying herself. Yes, I see another, that I have just cast my eyes on: Sappho must not utter the word *requiem*; in short, Metastasio may use such an anachronism, but Musæus must not, shall not.

I shall send the act and the letter to Giardini, as you order, though with regret I own: for I doubt his music will not have that majestic greatness and distinctiveness that are necessary to let the words be understood. Add that our singers want more to be taught to articulate than to sing. All the women jabber; and bad as his taste was, Beard did more justice to sense than any of our performers;

for though he laid a stress on every syllable, yet at least the audience, such as were capable, could suppose the right accents. In short, I wish your opera could be accompanied only by the lyre and the tibia.

There is no new event. The Parliament has done little or nothing, as they wait for Lord George to lead up the Blues. I have no time for details, and, in truth, I am thinking more of *Sappho* than of the nation, and am happy when I can amuse myself with reading anything but politics, which I am sure nobody will ever read after the day they are published; but indeed who does write what is readable? I have got two more volumes of Shenstone's *Correspondence*, and they are like all the rest, insipidity itself. Home's *Alfred* died three days old; *The Battle of Hastings*² is to appear this evening; the child of as feeble a parent. Garrick has been *reading* plays at Althorp à la Texier, and been adored as usual; yet I do not believe he succeeded half so well in the women. He goes on writing his wretched epilogues too, for he cannot sit down with the *strulbruggism* that he had the sense to take up.

There is a Mr. Potter³ too, I don't know who, that has published a translation of Æschylus, and as far as I have looked is a good poet. I am sure he has taste, for in his preface he speaks like an initiate of *Elfrida* and *Caractacus*. I am delighted with *Prometheus*, though I do not approve of a mad cow for first woman.

1833. TO EARL HARCOURT.

I RETURN your Lordship Mrs. Macaulay's letter with many thanks. I need not say how much I agree with her in most

² By Richard Cumberland.

³ Rev. Robert Potter (1721-1806), at this time master of a school at Scarning in Norfolk.

LETTER 1833. — Misplaced by C. amongst letters of Oct. 1778. (See *Notes and Queries*, Nov. 3, 1900.)

topics; but I smiled at her account of the provisions in France, and their *bad* cookery.

I accept always with great pleasure your Lordship's invitations; and certainly have no exceptions to the company specified. Though you are so very good as to name them, I think I may trust to never meeting at Harcourt House anybody that would be very disagreeable to me, much less that could balance the honour and pleasure of waiting on your Lordship and Lady Harcourt. I remember that Lady Townshend, in 1746, said she did not dare to dine anywhere, for fear of meeting with rebel pies. Thank God! we are in no danger *now* of such dishes. Indeed your Lordship and I have been more likely to be the ingredients than the guests at such banquets! Poor Lord Pigot¹! He *has dined* with a Scotchman²!

H. W.

1834. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Feb. 4, 1778.

I SHALL be sorry if you depend on me for your winter provision of news; I know so little, and the papers so much, that I could only repeat their information with not half their eloquence. All last week I was confined with a great cold which I thought it impossible for me to catch, not having had a genuine one these five or six years; I mean, not more than what I call a cold when I want an

¹ The confirmation of the news of Lord Pigot's death in captivity near Fort St. George reached England on Jan. 31, 1778.

² Colonel Stuart, second in command of the forces in Madras. 'On the 24th of August, 1776, the Colonel passed the greater part of the day in company or in business with Lord Pigot; he both breakfasted

and dined with him as his familiar friend, and was driving in the carriage with him when, according to the Colonel's previous orders, the carriage was surrounded and stopped by troops. His Lordship was then informed that he was their prisoner.' (Stanhope, *History of England*, ed. 1853-4, vol. vii. p. 269.)

excuse for not doing what I have not a mind to do; I was blooded in spite of the gout's teeth, and yet am well again.

I hear you have finished a third book of the *Garden*; thank the Muses you seldom do anything when you have nothing to do. It seems I am to learn your deeds from second and third hands.

As I suppose you care more about authors than politicians, I shall begin with the former. *The Battle of Hastings*—or rather one side of it, for not a Norman appears—has been acted. I have not seen it; the accounts are a little like a charade, for they say the first part makes one cry, the latter laugh, and the whole sleep. It will soon be gathered in due chronologic order to its predecessor *Alfred*.

I forgot till I had filled my sheet to answer your question about Lord Pigot¹, and then it was not worth while to tap a new page, as the account was contradicted. It is now confirmed. I know no more than you see in the newspapers, and thence you will collect that there has been more than meets the ear.

The enigma of the day, as he has oft been, is Lord Chatham. He has quarrelled with General Rockingham on the question of independence, and in a manner declared off; yet he is expected to-day in the House of Lords to anathematize the new levies². There is much talk too of his coming into place, which I doubt; everybody must have discovered that his crutch is no magic wand, and if the lame leads the blind it is not the way of shunning a ditch. Charles Fox has tumbled old Saturn from the throne of oratory, and if he has not all the dazzling lustre, has much

LETTER 1834.—¹ Mason, in one of his letters, referred to the suggestions of foul play in connection with Lord Pigot's death, which were freely made

at this time.

² A scheme was on foot to raise regiments without previously obtaining the consent of Parliament.

more of the solid materials. They say nothing ever excelled his oration against the *unfortunate minister*³, who was truly unfortunate that day, for had Lord George been present, the thunder had fallen on him. Charles's speech on Monday⁴ was as marvellous for method and memory, and was really unanswerable, for not one of the ministers knew what to say, and so said nothing, and that silence cost them many votes. In short, the minority amounted to above an hundred and sixty, in which were several Tories. It is supposed the inquiries will be put to a violent death, which will be very weak, for the people are contented with whatever is discussed and voted, but grow impatient when their ears are stopped by force.

The new levies are like Glendower's: he can stamp and call spirits from the vasty deep; but they don't come, consequently they will not go. I fancy the American war is pretty near an end—I mean as to attempting more than keeping what remains. I don't think there will be a French war *yet*, unless we chance to go together by the ears at sea. However, it hangs by a thread.

Having now given you the quintessence of my intelligence, you see it would not have made one more letter than it does. I shall reserve a vacuum for what may pass to-day in the Lords; but I have very rarely known a much-expected debate answer. Chance is as much mistress of orators as of generals; and the prepared engagements of both frequently turn out like Sir W. Howe's two *surveys* of Washington's army.

³ 'Charles Fox, in an admirable speech, attacked Lord North on having called himself an *unfortunate minister*, and proved that all the disgraces had happened by ignorance, blunders, and misconduct, not by misfortune. Lord North answered with some humour; and as Fox had accused him of idleness and listening

to flatterers, he said he passed a great deal of time in that House, where he could not be idle, and it was plain was not *flattered*.' (*Last Journals*, vol. ii. pp. 183-4.)

⁴ Feb. 2, 1778, when both Houses went upon the inquiry into the state of the nation.

5th.

Lord Chatham did not appear: they say he has the gout, but I suppose not so bad but he could hobble to the end of the Park⁵ if he was much entreated. I have heard of nothing particular that passed in either House, but have seen nobody that was in either; in good truth I am little curious about debates. The ruin has gone a great deal too far to make Parliament of any consequence; speakers may amuse themselves with filling up the interstices of events, but when a house is falling, does one care who painted the staircase? Yes, Lord Chatham does. Because he once raised the building a story higher, he thinks he could do as much when the foundations have given way. Adieu! I long to see your *Garden*. I am forced to read the newspapers, or my eyes would starve, yet it is feeding them with offals.

1835. TO THE EARL OF STRAFFORD.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am always as proud as happy in having the honour of waiting on your Lordship, as I will on Saturday, and as I should much oftener in a morning if I went out—but I may tell you the truth, as you will not laugh at me. I am not young enough to have spirits for the whole day, and if I did not stay at home in a morning, I should not be able to go through the evening with any satisfaction, and sup out, as I must do, if I will live with some of those I am most connected with. When one grows so old as I do one must be an economist of one's spirits as well as money, or go off like the fashionable people of the age.

Your Lordship's most truly devoted

Feb. 4th, 1778.

H. WALPOLE.

⁵ To the Queen's House.

LETTER 1835.—Not in C.; printed from original in British Museum.

1836. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Feb. 6, 1778.

It is odd, that in the heat of a Parliamentary campaign, enlivened by a civil war, I should have nothing particular to tell you. The troops of the latter are gone into winter quarters. The others are in the field, and skirmish every day. If any of the generals are wounded, they do not own it. Some of the forces of the larger army have deserted to the enemy; and on Monday the numbers of the opposition mounted to an hundred and sixty odd. On the other hand, it is commonly believed that the old general of the minority, Lord Chatham, is to command the King's forces. It is certain that there is a great coolness between him and General Rockingham, but I think that disagreement so much more beneficial to the court; and I see so little advantage to be acquired by gaining an old commander without soldiers, so fractious, so unsettled, and so impracticable, that I shall wonder much if he is invited to take the lead. It might add to the present distractions, and could cure none.

As my opinions do not always agree with the majority anywhere, it is not mine that we are on the brink of a French war. It is needless to repeat my reasons; I have told you them before.

The Duke of Gloucester has again been out of order; but not near so ill, I think, as some thought, or as I have seen him. He still coughs a good deal. His constitution is always alarming, and one must not trust too much to the wonderful recoveries he has had; yet perhaps frequent advertisements are not contrary, lest his youth and courage should make him presume too much.

These paragraphs are the quintessence of my letter, and

it ought to end here, were it a decent quantity: yet why should one write more than what one has to say? A letter tells you I am not negligent, though perhaps I grow lazy. I never was good at detailing. The event of things is all I mind; which I own does not help conversation. I leave you ignorant of nothing decisive. The present inquiries in Parliament into the conduct of the war I look on as a tale of a tub. The ministers give themselves up to be teased, more to amuse their antagonists than inform them; and the latter are pleased with making speeches. But can all this make peace, or carry on the war? Neither: but the inability of making either will produce other-guess events, and they *will* be serious.

These are my politics, which I adopt from no side, and preach to nobody. They are of not much use even to myself; for I am not of an age to trouble myself about what is to happen. When one talks of the times, one must think something; and, *isolé* as I am, it is more natural to look at the affairs of nations than at the feathers and fashions of the young, though perhaps as grave a subject. I would neither be boyish nor morose. Age, without any study on my part, has given me great indifference, and yet has been so good as to leave me spirits enough to be tranquil and to amuse myself. It is enough, not to *wish* to live or die.

1837. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Feb. 12, 1778.

I HAVE received two letters from you, one of the 6th, and another of the 8th, but not the long one you mention; for the first was but of twenty-five lines, and the latter of twenty-three, neither of which I should think a long one from anybody from whom I liked to hear at all, much less

shall you pretend that one page is to pass for length; yet I conclude you have written none that I have not received. However, I answer you immediately, that you may ascertain the fact, and I wish for the future you would keep the dates of the letters you do write, long or short.

I will not talk now of the story¹ you mention, which I not only know, but remember happening. *Basta!* there will be a time.

I am dismally afraid I shall not be able to go to *Elfrida* on Saturday. My cold, that I thought gone, is worse, with the addition of a sore throat. I have not been out of my doors these two days, and as putrid sore throats are very rife, of which one of Lord Bute's daughters² is dead, I am afraid of ripening mine to one. I am a little sorry you bestow your words not only on folk that cannot act, but on voices that cannot articulate. If *Sappho* is to be sung, I wish it were by Italians, for from the pains they take to speak English, they pronounce more distinctly than our natives.

I sent your act to Giardini, and wish he may make it discourse most eloquent music. His violin to be sure will make a long soliloquy; but though I like Handel, I am not bigoted. I thought Dryden's *Ode* more harmonious before he set it than after, yet he had expression; and I prefer Charles Fox's 'native wood notes' to Burke's feigned

LETTER 1837.—¹ The story occurs in Mason's letter of Feb. 8, 1778 (see *Correspondence of Walpole and Mason*, vol. i. p. 333, where also Horace Walpole states in a note that it relates to Lord Mansfield). It is as follows:—'In 1745, when the rebels were at Derby, and subscriptions were going on in London, a certain (then) barrister at Lincoln's Inn was called upon by a parish officer for his name, &c. He was treated as a man should be that solicits an illegal unconstitutional subscription.

The rebels retreated from Derby. The barrister flew immediately to the parish officer's house to put down his name; the P. O. was from home, had locked up the book; a blacksmith was called for to break open the bureau, and the name was inserted! This parish officer lived either in Long Acre, or Great Queen Street. This I had from good authority two years ago, and was told the fact might yet be authenticated.'

² Lady Augusta Corbett, fourth daughter of Lord Bute.

voice, though it goes to the highest pitch of the gamut of wit.

Apropos, his last Friday's parody of Burgoyne's talk with the Indians was the *chef-d'œuvre* of wit, humour, and just satire, and almost suffocated Lord North himself with laughter; as his pathetic description of the barbarities of the Cis-atlantic army

Drew iron tears down Barré's cheek.

I wish I could give you an idea of that superlative oration. He was pressed to print it, but says he has not time during the session. How cold, how inadequate will be my fragment of a sketch from second, third, and thousandth hands; yet I must send you a bit of a daub with probably even the epithets wrong or misplaced, though each was picturesque. Well, though I can neither draw nor colour, *invenies etiam disjecta membra*. Hurlothrumbo exhorted seventeen Indian nations, who so far from understanding the Hurlothrumbic dialect, are probably almost as ignorant of English; he exhorted them by the dictates of *our* holy religion, and by their reverence for *our* constitution, to repair to his Majesty's standard. 'Where was that?' said Burke: 'on board Lord Dunmore's ship;' ³—and he exhorted them (I suppose by the same divine and human laws) not to touch the hair of the head of man, woman, or child, while living, though he was willing to deal with them for scalps of the dead, being a nice and distinguished judge between the scalp taken from a dead person and the head of a person that dies of being scalped. 'Let us state this Christian exhortation and Christian injunction,' said Burke, 'by a more family picture. Suppose there was a riot on Tower Hill, what would the keeper of his Majesty's lions do? would he not fling open the dens of the wild beasts, and then address them thus?—

³ See note on letter to Mason of Dec. 21, 1776.

“My gentle lions, my humane bears, my sentimental wolves, my tender-hearted hyenas, go forth ; but I exhort ye, as ye are Christians and members of a civilized society, to take care not to hurt man, woman, or child, &c., &c.” Barré’s codicil was to threaten to paste on churches this memorable talk under the injunctions of the bishops for a fast. Governor Johnstone said he rejoiced there were no strangers in the gallery, as Burke’s speech would have excited them to tear the ministers to pieces as they went out of the House ; the ministers are much more afraid of losing their places. Eloquence, like music, is too much improved in our days to have any of their old effects on the passions of a large audience.

Voilà a truly long letter. I leave the application to your conscience.

1838. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Feb. 18, 1778.

I HAVE two small morsels of news to tell you, and do not know which you will choose to hear first. As you cannot choose without knowing, it would be vain to wait for your answer, especially as I cannot state them without preferring one to the other. Iricisms, it is true, are not out of fashion. *Nos seigneurs* the Peers will not vote truisms to be true, lest they should betray the weakness of the nation, though those truisms, and the reason for not asserting them, are given in every newspaper, which newspapers are read in every coffee-house in Paris. *Ergo* their Lordships suppose that France supposes herself to know nothing but what appears in the votes.

As a loyal subject and freeman of Parnassus, I must believe that you interest yourself more in Heliconian affairs than in the politics of the *late* empire of Great Britain.

I therefore announce to you the arrival of Voltaire at Paris. Yes; there he is. Probably *recalled from exile to raise a regiment of infidels for the defence of holy Church.*

The other event would not be worth mentioning, but for its novelty. In that light, to be sure, no parallel instance is to be found in ancient or modern history, whether Ammonite, Jewish, Chaldean, Egyptian, Chinese, Greek, Roman, Constantinopolitan, Frank, French, British, Saxon, Pict, Ossianite, Mogul, Indian, or English (all which I have examined carefully this morning to no purpose), nay, in the tales of the fairies, in which I am still more deeply versed, I find nothing similar. You perhaps, who have all ecclesiastical history at your fingers' ends, may recollect something approaching to the transaction of *yesterday the 17th of February*, a day of confession and humiliation, that will be remembered as long as the name of England exists. Yesterday, Feb. 17, did the whole administration, by the mouth of their spokesman, Lord North—no, no, not resign; on the contrary, try to keep their places by a full and ample confession of all their faults, and by a still more extraordinary act,—by doing full justice both to America and to the opposition,—by allowing that the former are no cowards nor conquerable,—that they are no rebels, for the new Commissioners are to treat with the Congress or anybody, and, by asking pardon by effects, i. e. the cancelling all offensive acts, and by acknowledging the independence of the thirteen provinces, not *verbally* yet *virtually*. These were Lord North's words. To the opposition full justice is done; for if the administration has been in the wrong from beginning to end, their opponents must have been a little in the right.

The faults of the administration, according to their own calculation, are *two*: one of being misinformed, the other of persisting in a mere point of honour. Some will perhaps think they have been guilty of two more;—the destruction

of twenty-four thousand lives on their own side, and Lord knows how many thousands on t'other, with the burning of towns, desolation of the country, and the expense of above thirty millions of money ; the second consists of two parts — rejection of all proposals of accommodation offered by the opposition, and the delay of offering terms themselves till they knew it was too late ; for Lord North was asked if he did not know that the treaty¹ between the Americans and France is signed ? He would not answer till Sir George Saville hallooed out, 'An answer, an answer, an answer !' His Lordship then rose, could not deny the fact, but said he did not know it *officially* ; that is, I suppose, it does not stand on the votes of the Parliament at Paris.

What shall I say more ? though this is not half of that ignominious seventeenth of February. The measure passed *nemine contradicente*. The Tories gulped their shame, the rest *pocketed*. *Note*. The opposition proved an attempt at peace, though a hopeless one. Charles Fox congratulated himself on having converted Lord North. The papers will tell you the rest. If anything could deepen this recantation of wilful criminality, it is that it was extorted at last by the urgency of the moment ; in short, to prevent this pretended spirit of pacification from being anticipated by France's notification of her alliance with the American States to all Europe ;—what if by a declaration of war ! Her troops are in full march to the coast, the Duc de Lauzun recalled hence and ordered to be in France by the 26th. How one blushes to be an Englishman ! to be a countryman of the majority ! I have no comfort but that I am not a Scot.

A night's rest has not dissipated the astonishment of mankind. Everybody that comes in stares, and cannot

LETTER 1838. — ¹ A commercial treaty signed at Paris on Feb. 6, 1778, by Franklin, Lee, and Deane

on the part of America and by Gérard, Secretary of the King's Council, on the part of France.

express himself. Who can at once reconcile a supplication of alliance with the high and mighty States of America, with a total improbability of obtaining it? and the faintest hope of peace, with a prospect of a war with France? How, an acknowledgement of independence, with a pretension of supplies, or a suspension of the war for a year and a half, with any intention of renewing it, when the Americans shall have had time to settle their government and recruit? but who *can* digest all the contradictions into which the Government plunges every day?

Who can believe what I have read in the papers to-day?—that one Hutton², a Moravian, has been dispatched to Paris to fling himself at Dr. Franklin's feet and sue for forgiveness? it is said that the man fell on the Doctor's neck with tears, and implored peace. What triumph on one side! what humiliation on the other! Will princes still listen to those vile flatterers who fascinate them with visions of empire, that terminate in such mortifications? for the philosopher replied, 'It is too late.'

One cannot rein one's pen at such a moment: it runs away with moralities; but I will stifle commonplace reflections. Shall I not appear a trifler if I can mix anything else with such thoughts? yet having crossed over into a fourth page, I will fill up the remainder with two bagatelles; one was a story related in the House of Commons. Somebody passing along the road in Scotland, heard great outcries, and lamentation, and complaints of violence. He stopped to inquire the cause; another person replied, 'Oh, they are only making volunteers,' i.e. pressing volunteers.

I have waded through *Alfred*³. The author says it has been objected that he has tamed a legislator into a lover in a hovel, but he pleads that Alfred had probably been in love. The same excuse would apologize for representing

² James Hutton (1715-1795).

³ A tragedy by John Home.

the Duke of Marlborough, not as a hero, but slabbering in his dotage. In the play itself I found this line, and have written in the title-page as a motto,

I shall surprise you much; my name is Alfred;

mine is

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

P.S. Pray tell me you receive this.

1839. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1778.

I do not know how to word the following letter; how to gain credit with you! How shall I intimate to you, that you must lower your topsails, waive your imperial dignity, and strike to the colours of the thirteen United Provinces of America? Do not tremble, and imagine that Washington has defeated General Howe, and driven him out of Philadelphia; or that Gates has taken another army; or that Portsmouth is invested by an American fleet. No: no military *new* event has occasioned this revolution. The sacrifice has been made on the altar of peace. Stop again: peace is not made, it is only implored,—and, I fear, only on this side of the Atlantic. In short, yesterday, *February* 17th, a most memorable era, Lord North opened his conciliatory plan,—no partial, no collusive one. In as few words as I can use, it solicits peace with the States of America: it haggles on no terms; it acknowledges the Congress, or anybody that pleases to treat; it confesses errors, misinformation, ill-success, and impossibility of conquest; it disclaims taxation, desires commerce, hopes for assistance, allows the independence of America, not verbally, yet virtually, and suspends hostilities till June

1779. It does a little more: not *verbally*, but *virtually*, it confesses that the opposition have been in the right from the beginning to the end.

The warmest American cannot deny but these gracious condescensions are ample enough to content that whole continent; and yet, my friend, such accommodating facility had one defect,—it came too late. The treaty between the high and mighty States and France is signed; and instead of peace, we must expect war with the high allies. The French army is come to the coast, and their officers here are recalled.

The House of Commons embraced the plan, and voted it, *nemine contradicente*. It is to pass both Houses with a rapidity that will do everything but overtake time past. All the world is in astonishment. As my letter will not set out till the day after to-morrow, I shall have time to tell you better what is thought of this amazing step.

Feb. 20.

In sooth I cannot tell you what is thought. Nobody knows what to think. To leap at once from an obstinacy of four years to a total concession of everything; to stoop so low, without hopes of being forgiven—who can understand such a transformation? I must leave you in all your wonderment; for the cloud is not dispersed. When it shall be, I doubt it will discover no serene prospect! All that remains certain is, that America is not only lost but given up. We must no longer give ourselves Continental airs! I fear even our trident will find it has lost a considerable prong.

I have lived long, but never saw such a day as last Tuesday! From the first, I augured ill of this American war; yet do not suppose that I boast of my penetration. Far was I from expecting such a conclusion! Conclusion!

—*y sommes-nous?* Acts of Parliament have made a war, but cannot repeal one. They have provoked—not terrified; and Washington and Gates have respected the Speaker's mace no more than Oliver Cromwell did.

You shall hear as events arise. I disclaim all sagacity, and pretend to no foresight. It is not an Englishman's talent. Even the second sight of the Scots has proved a little purblind.

You have heard that Voltaire is actually at Paris? Perhaps soon you will learn French news earlier than I can.

What scenes my letters to you have touched on for eight-and-thirty years! I arrived here at the eve of the termination of my father's happy reign. The Rebellion, as he foresaw, followed; and much disgrace. Another war ensued, with new disgraces. And then broke forth Lord Chatham's sun; and all was glory and extensive empire. Nor tranquillity nor triumph are our lot now! The womb of time is not with child of a mouse,—but adieu! I shall probably write again before you have digested half the meditations this letter will have conjured up.

1840. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, March 4, 1778.

It is not from having anything new to tell you that I write you a few lines, but to ask how I may send you half a dozen more *Gazettes Littéraires*, for I conclude your Varelsts¹ are in town. There is no hurry about them; they will always be equally new to you, and not be much so neither. You will find in them the following pretty riddle, which I had seen before:

LETTER 1840.—¹ The family of Harry Verelst (d. 1785), ex-Governor of Bengal, who had purchased Aston

Hall, near Sheffield, from Lord Holderness, and was in consequence a neighbour of Mason.

*Eloigné de l'objet que j'aime,
Lui seul calme mon ennui ;
Il est plus beau que l'amour même,
Mais elle est plus belle que lui.*

The word is a *portrait*, and is rather too enigmatic, for one must know the solution, to find any sense in *elle*. I have translated it, but as we have no genders it is impossible to render *lui* and *elle* ; my imitation perhaps makes it too clear :

From the dear object of my dreams
Remov'd, I still that object see
As fair as love itself it seems :
Yet she is fairer still than he.

I wish you would try it ; you will have better success. I have made another enigma on the same subject, but cannot tell whether it is good or bad, for how can one tell whether a riddle is difficult to guess, when one knows the subject beforehand ? but do not I lay you under the same difficulty, *le voici !*

I counterfeit all bodies, yet have none.
Bodies give shadows, shadows give me one
Loved for another's sake ; that person yet
Is my chief enemy whene'er we meet ;
Thinks me too old, though blest with endless youth,
And like a monarch hates my speaking truth.

The two middle verses are very bad, I know.

I agree with you ; there is no harm in Mrs. *Elfrida* Hartley's pregnancy. Your drama² could not be well represented by the set at Covent Garden ; not that the union of the two companies will make one good, yet will be a better than the worse half. However, I doubt whether the old saying will prove true in your case, that *ce qui est différé n'est pas perdu*. My reason I gave six weeks ago to

² *Elfrida*, a dramatic poem by Mason.

Le Texier. He was consulting me whether I thought it would be advantageous for him to take the Opera House on the present plan (on which the other managers had outbidden him): I replied, 'Oui, tant qu'il y ait de l'Angleterre.'

The two conciliatory bills are so very yielding, that nothing but the immediate dread of a French war, or the impossibility of raising money to maintain the armies and fleets in America, could have reconciled the court to such vast concessions, if they are sincere in the desire of treating, which, notwithstanding wiser men than I believe them, I doubt. I can see obvious reasons for seeming to treat: I hear none to persuade me that the Americans will treat. Lord Carlisle is named one of the Commissioners, and is very fit to make a treaty that will not be made.

Voltaire came to Paris without leave, but they say has received an indulgent promise from Monsr. de Maurepas that he shall not be molested. His chief object was to get a new play acted, which he calls *Irène*; it was *Alexis Comnène*, but the latter word sounded too harsh. He has half dispatched himself with reading this piece to the actors, and thinks of nothing else except of being received by the King and Queen, which Madame du Deffand, who has made him two visits, thinks he will not obtain. I should like to have been present at this interview of the two only surviving lilies of the *siècle de Louis Quatorze*; yet he is more occupied with the dandelions of the present age.

I am very thankful for the extract Mr. Burgh³ gave himself the trouble to send me, and am satisfied. Mrs. Delany had heard of and insisted on seeing the tragedy. I knew how it would shock her devout delicacy. She

³ William Burgh (1741-1808), an Irishman, and owner of estates in that country, who lived in York. Burgh and Mason had political

sympathies. The former edited an edition of Mason's *English Garden* in 1783.

returned it with compliments, but was sorry the subject would condemn it to oblivion—perhaps so ; and its more intrinsic demerits, but I do not think being acted will save many of its contemporaries ! I am impatient to see your sermon⁴. Did you observe a passage in the Fast Service that has diverted people much, as it came out just after the *nemine contradicente* on the pacific bills ? ‘Then all the people shall say *after the minister*, Turn us, O Lord, and so shall we be turned.’

I am tempted to sign my name in French, for the pleasure of quoting the following lines from Voltaire’s *Indiscret*, the ridiculous parts of which suit me exactly :

TRASIMON.

le vieux Seigneur Horace

M’a prié,—

DAMIS.

Voilà bien de quoi je m’embarrasse.

*Horace est un vieux fou, plutôt qu’un vieux seigneur,
Tout chamarré d’orgueil, pétri d’un faux honneur,
Assez bas à la cour, important à la ville
Et non moins ignorant qu’il veut paroître habile.*

HORACE.

1841. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 5, 1778.

Your letter, my dear Sir, which I received two days ago, is dated the 7th of last month ; and you there speak with great distrust of seeing Lady Lucy again. I fear your forebodings were too well founded ; for it is said here that she is actually dead¹. I had heard so ten days ago, but flattered myself that it was not true. Now I see it

⁴ A sermon preached by Mason before the Archbishop of York on the occasion of the General Fast, observed on Feb. 27, 1778.

LETTER 1841.—¹ Lady Lucy Mann died in Italy on the 7th of January. *Walpole*.

mentioned in the papers. As you only just knew her enough to love and lament her, I am sorry you ever did see her! Your nephew will feel the loss of so amiable a woman; and yet it is better for him that it is over; as he was only witness to her decay, and perpetually tortured with fears and doubts. His behaviour is exceedingly honourable to him, and discovers a true *Mann's* heart,—unluckily, to make that expression just, it is necessary to double the *n*. I have talked to you philosophically on the vanity of being attached to the continuation of families; yet it is so natural, and I am so susceptible of that vanity, that I look forward to your nephew's marrying again, and having an heir to Linton.

There is another of your name dead, but who, as far as I can find, was not your relation; yet I imagine he was, as he is dead in my brother's and my office, to which he was probably recommended by your father; for the person, John Mann, was very old. His death makes it necessary for us to send you the enclosed paper, which you will be so good as to sign and return as soon as you can, that we may make the necessary succession. I have persuaded Sir Edward to consent that all the clerks shall rise by seniority, unless signally unworthy; it is an encouragement to their zeal; and surely they who do all the business for us, ought to enjoy the fruits of their labours by being preferred, and having nobody put over their heads.

You will have been impatient for the consequences of Lord North's conciliatory plan. The substantial consequence cannot, you are sensible, be known till the Commissioners² arrive in America, and return the answer of the Congress; unless their departure is anticipated by some strong declaration of France in their favour, and

² The Earl of Carlisle, Governor Johnstone, and William Eden (afterwards Lord Auckland).

which would render a treaty hopeless: many expect such a notification immediately. I am grown such a sceptic, that I believe nothing but *facts past*. The bills meet no obstruction in the House of Commons. They are to-day before the Lords; where I suppose they will experience comments rather than impediments. The intended pacification is not very popular, yet at most produces low murmurs. The nation has leaped from outrageous war to a most humiliating supplication for peace, with as little emotion as one passes in an ague from a shivering fit to a burning one; though I think in the inverted order, for I never had an ague. Methinks the patient's being so little affected by the sudden transition looks as if its constitution had contracted the insensibility of dotage. Every week may produce an era; yet I think nothing very important will happen yet. France has patience in one sense of the word, and we in another; and therefore we shall *bear* as long as they *forbear*. They best know what term they have set to their inactivity; my whole wisdom consists in abstaining from conjectures. Penetration is a fine thing; a genius now and then looks into futurity: but all I know is, that I have no such talent, nor believe much in those that pretend to it. My old face, like the one of Janus, only looks back; the young one may look forward to what will belong to it, and youth is apt to think it sees far: but age is as often mistaken, when it takes its experience for spectacles; they magnify the dim eye that looks through them, more than the objects they look to.

I will certainly mention you at our little court, when they return to town. At present they are gone to the Duke's lodge³ in the New Forest for change of air. Indeed, it seems very difficult for his Royal Highness to find a situation that suits him. Heats destroy him, and damps

³ The Duke of Gloucester was Warden of the New Forest.

are as bad. He caught cold above a month ago, had a violent cough, and the asthma frightfully since. It is a terrifying disorder to see; yet I am much easier when he suffers under it, than when the humour falls on his bowels. If he does not mend in the Forest, they will make a voyage to Bourdeaux for some weeks for the benefit of the sea-air, and return when the great heats reign. Mrs. Haywood⁴ has been dying of a fever—so have many persons. Sir Thomas Hesketh⁵ died at once⁶ the night before last—but has long been dying.

The principality of Auverquerque⁷ is a sort of Iricism. King William would not allow the Lords Rochford⁸ and Grantham⁹, as they were illegitimate branches from Prince Maurice and Prince Henry Frederic, to take the name of Nassau, but obliged them to bear those of Zulestein and Auverquerque; after his death they assumed that of Nassau. The Duke of Marlborough never preferred the principality of Mindleheim to his duchy: surely an English peerage with substantial privilege in one's own country is more dignified than a nominal principality in another; when it is transferred to a third country, it is still more ridiculous. I wonder Mademoiselle Pitt does not beg the Pope to create her Princess Fossani. I knew a foreigner at Paris who had a madness of wearing the orders of different countries. He was forbidden to assume the Saint-Esprit, but indulged in every other knighthood. I have seen him at the theatres

⁴ Bedchamber Woman to the Duchess of Gloucester.

⁵ Sir Thomas Hesketh, first Baronet, of Rufford, Lancashire.

⁶ So in MS.; probably a slip for 'of one.'

⁷ Lord Cowper, being made a Prince of the Empire, had a mind to have that title; his mother being one of the daughters and co-heiresses of Lord Grantham. *Walpole*.

⁸ The father of the first Earl of Rochford of the Nassau family was a natural son of Henry Frederick, Prince of Orange, grandfather of William III.

⁹ The grandfather of the first Earl of Grantham (who did not, apparently, assume the name of Nassau) was Maurice, Prince of Orange, great-uncle of William III.

by turns Knight of the Garter, Bath, Thistle, Elephant, &c., &c. We had once a mad Queen Elizabeth here, who on the first day of the session, as my father was coming down from St. James's, gave him her speech and ordered him to read it to her Parliament ;—it was not Mrs. Pitt, I assure you, nor Lady Mary Coke.

Strawberry Hill, 8th. Mr. Suckling did not bring me the instrument on Friday, as I expected ; so I must reserve my letter till Tuesday.

Strawberry Hill, 10th.

I have not got it yet, so send my letter away without it, and will send it another post.

It looks very much now as if the war would soon make itself. A French squadron is sailed westward, and Captain Digby¹⁰ has been dispatched with another in pursuit of it. Seamen are not apt to be so formal and dilatory as plenipotentiaries. The passions too begin to awaken. The City grows moody again ; the stocks fall ; the ministers are warmly pressed in both Houses. The new loan of six millions does not take kindly. The bended knee to America does not please. Dr. Franklin boasts that Philadelphia will be starved into a Burgoyneism. Lord Temple seems to snuff confusion and is come forth again, and spoke against the conciliatory bills. Last year he entrapped John the Painter : I suppose he solves these inconsistencies by constancy to *self*. In that light, how uniform has his whole life been ; though every brother and every friend has been sacrificed to his passions ! I, that sit aloof from the conflict, see these things as they are ; and should behold them with indifference, if the general want of principle were not a worse indication of approaching ruin than the concomitant circumstances. All men see a prospect of rising on con-

¹⁰ Captain (afterwards Admiral) Robert Digby (1732–1815), grandson of fifth Baron Digby.

fusion : no man reflects that want of virtue cannot correct what the want of it has occasioned. Adieu !

1842. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

I RETURN you the sermon, and would not advise its being printed unless much clamoured against ; when, as all objections are exaggerated, it will appear less offensive than was expected. I would certainly have the two passages on Dalrymple's History and the sons of the Scottish rebels softened. They should not be quite changed, as they will certainly be remembered. I would entirely omit the glance at the ladies, who are very innocent in comparison of the men of the age. I would still be more earnest for his leaving out the passage on himself. I am totally against such declarations, and can see no reason why he¹ should not be a bishop, when some of its worthless occupiers are gone. I think the time is coming when the sermon will have more weight, and *as it has been preached*, it cannot be recalled. The taxes, the treaty with the Americans, and the probable imminent war with France, will make it little noticed at this moment, but by his enemies. Let them be a little silenced and dashed, and they will not care to clamour. It cannot be lost, because it has been preached ; we should have a little patience, and I think it will not be necessary long.

1843. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Monday night, late, March 16, 1778.

I HAD not seen the *Morning Post* when I dissuaded publication¹. You certainly have had provocation, if you are

LETTER 1842.—Hitherto printed as part of the letter to Mason of Jan. 17, 1778. (See *Notes and*

Queries, Aug. 4, 1900.)

¹ Mason, the writer of the sermon.

LETTER 1843.—¹ The publication

inclined to take it : I trust at least your testimony will not be lost. Perhaps the present instant is not the fittest, as the French Ambassador's declaration has engaged all attention ; I mean as far as a first moment can do ; for in two days I suppose we shall be as thoughtless as ever. Nay, they who should be most alarmed, seem besotted—indeed they had little way to go ; but an old regiment is to sail to-morrow for Halifax. I went out of town on Saturday morning, not knowing of the French declaration² ; it followed me to Strawberry that night, yet, as if I were a minister, I did not return till this afternoon ; and as both Houses are sitting, could get no further intelligence. I shall probably hear something before this sets out, but what can I learn that I do not know ? The alternative is to be buffeted by France and turn t'other cheek, or to have England and Ireland invaded. I could almost wish the storm would burst on Scotland ; but who would go thither ? There is one consolation, however, in our wretched state ; it had been ten thousand times more grievous to have America conquered and England enslaved ; and the guilty will now be the greatest sufferers. Nay, October was twelvemonth, I should have jumped at an option of the present moment. In short, we are disgraced and ruined, and shall never be what we have been—but Scotland will not triumph. I know not whether the ministers will endeavour to hold their places six months longer by the favour of France ; or whether Lord Chatham's old crutch

of Mason's sermon. Mason had drawn Horace Walpole's attention to some remarks on it in the *Morning Post*.

² On March 13 'Monsieur de Noailles, the Ambassador of France, delivered to Lord Weymouth a declaration from the King his master, acquainting his Majesty that the King of France had concluded a

Treaty of Commerce and Amity with the Independent States of America, but had had the attention for his Majesty of not making it exclusive of their trading with us ; but should any interruption be given to the commerce between France and America, the former would support the dignity of their flag.' (*Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 223.)

will be sent for to draw a circle round St. James's. I expect nothing but patching and botching from anybody, which will suit the insensibility of the times. There are no grounds for confidence anywhere. We shall moulder piecemeal into our insignificant islandhood, for it is an age for vigorous resurrection. I will go answer the rest of your letter before I go to bed, that I may not dream of our shameful position, nor have visions of revival that will never be realized.

You accuse me very unjustly of neglecting your alteration of my tragedy³. I always thought it magic, to be effected by so few words, and should have adopted it, had I ever had thoughts of its being represented; but nothing could induce me to venture it on the stage, not from superabundant modesty, but from the abusive spirit of the times. I have no notion of presenting oneself coolly to a savage mob to be torn to pieces; and you know I am as tender of my friends as of myself. I think this country at present in every light the sink of Europe; void of taste and of everything ingenuous. Calamity has often resuscitated its powers, but there are few or no instances I believe of an empire that has fallen by its own corruptions, replacing itself on its throne. My vanity is too proud to desire to twinkle under the auspices of Palæologi and Porphyrogeniti. Should I be remembered, I should wish it might be as one of the last reign.

I have entirely forgotten what Sir John Dalrymple said in his preface, but am most sure that if he quotes a Walpole as his recommender, it must have been my cousin Thomas; for I never saw the wretch, nor ever had the most indirect connection with him. To Mrs. Macaulay I did give a letter, but am ashamed of it, as she ought to be of her foolish and absurd *Summary*⁴, which is a wretched compilation from

³ *The Mysterious Mother.*

⁴ Probably her *History of England*

from the Revolution to the Present Time, in a Series of Letters to a Friend,

magazines, full of gross mistakes, and confounding all characters, levelling all for no end or purpose, but to support so silly an hypothesis, as that no king can be a good king, because he is a king. She defends James II for the nonsensical pleasure of abusing King William, and has no more idea of general merit than Sir John Dalrymple. In short, whom does she approve but herself and her idolater—that dirty disappointed hunter of a mitre, Dr. Wilson⁵, and Alderman Heathcote, a paltry worthless Jacobite, whom I remember, and her own grandfather Sawbridge⁶, who, *she has been told*, was a mighty worthy man, though dipped in the infamous job of the South Sea? In short, I ran through the book, had forgotten it, and only recollect it now to answer your question.

I enclose with this a letter I wrote to you last week, but did not care to send by the post; you will find some curious particulars in it. I have finished certain verses of which you saw part, but shall reserve them till we meet, as I shall the rest of my paper till to-morrow. By the way, I do not know who the transcriber of your sermon is, nor guess what you mean by ‘the triumph of the minority,’ unless you allude to their carrying one question against Lord North for a tax on places. It would have been a greater blow to the crown than they will ever give, even if they become the majority; but they lost in the next night, on the report, and will take care not to carry it, if ever they are ministers.

17th.

Lord Stormont⁷ is recalled, for we are to be angry, since being tame would not do. Dr. Franklin is to be received

of which the first volume was published in 1778.

⁵ Dr. Thomas Wilson, Rector of St. Stephen's Church, Wallbrook, where he erected a statue of Mrs. Macaulay within the altar rails.

On her second marriage to Mr. Graham, Dr. Wilson quarrelled with her, and sold the statue.

⁶ Jacob Sawbridge, a Director of the South Sea Company.

⁷ English Ambassador in Paris.

at Versailles to-day as Ambassador. A message is to be delivered to each House to-day, and the majority in each is, I suppose, to answer,—‘We will assist you to chastise France for having been forced by you to pick up what you threw away.’ Lord North had the modesty yesterday to recommend unanimity, and to affirm he keeps his place from a point of honour. Burke made a fine application of Lord Bedford’s answer to King James, ‘I had a son who could have advised your Majesty’: ‘America could have assisted your Majesty.’ Charles Fox’s reply was in a rougher style. The stocks are not of the heroic majority, yet I believe the ministers will stay from errant fear at St. James’s till they are torn out of it. That will be a poor compensation and an useless precedent; for posterity, with all its reading, is never the better for example. James II could read, but could not remember even what he had seen.

Well! I must finish, though my pen’s tongue could run on for ever. I feel all sort of feelings, none comfortable, but that we shall be despicable first before we are slaves; the contrary would be more mortifying. France has a right to humble us. The true English who are in America have behaved like Englishmen, without any Scot-alloy. The victories of France will be over Scots. Dr. Franklin’s triumph has been over a Scot Ambassador. Pursue this idea; we shall have occasion to pay ourselves with leathern coin.

P.S. Let me know the moment you receive this packet. I add a French tract⁸ which you must take care to return, though I understand little of it. The *Gazette Littéraire* will show you how it relates to their present musical

⁸ Perhaps the *Entretien sur l’État de la Musique Grecque au Quatrième Siècle*, by the Abbe Barthélemy, sent

to Horace Walpole early in March by Madame du Deffand.

contests⁹. What I understand is able and full of address, but surely the irony is above most readers. I shall be glad to have all my gazettes again when you come this waywards.

1844. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

March 17, 1778.

I HAVE scarce a moment's time to write, and it is only—what an *only*!—to tell you that the French Ambassador notified to Lord Weymouth on Friday, that his court had concluded a treaty of commerce and amity with the independent States of America; *but* had had the *attention* not to make it an exclusive treaty: so, we may *trade* with America, if America will condescend to trade with us. I doubt there were some words of France not being disposed to be molested in their commerce with their new friends. In consequence of that declaration, Lord Stormont's recall was sent off that night. To-day the ministers are to acquaint both Houses with the insult; and, I suppose, intend to be addressed with vows of support. The stocks, not being members of Parliament, do not vote for war, nor behave like heroes. Alas! I am ashamed of irony. Neither do I love to send my auguries through every post-house. However, every one must know that a French war is not exactly a compensation for the loss of America. We, the herd, the *Achivi*, must take the beverage our rulers brew for us; and we that can, must console ourselves with not having contributed to the potion. I believe it will be a bitter one; but I should be still less tranquil if I had furnished a drop.

I have received your melancholy letter on poor Lady Lucy's death, and had written to you on it before, nor will open the wound again. Our situation will remove that cloud, and fill your mind with others.

⁹ The disputes of the supporters of Glück and Piccini.

Europe is going again to be a theatre of blood, as America has been. The Emperor and Prussia are going, I think have begun a war! 'Tis endless to moralize; human life is forced to do so, but *en pure perte*. The system changes, not the consequences. Force was the first great arbitress of human affairs. The shrewd observed, that Art could counteract and control Strength—and for a long time Policy ruled. But, Policy having exhausted all its resources, and having been detected in them all, Impudence restored Force, which is now sole governess. She seized and shared Poland, and now sets up the same right to Bavaria. We tried the plan in America, but forgot we had not that essential to the new *jus gentium*, an hundred thousand men, and that our Bavaria¹ was on t'other side of the Atlantic. I hope the ocean, that was against us there, will be our friend at home!

Adieu! This is a new chapter in our correspondence. I will write as events rise; you must excuse me if I have not always time, as I have not at present, to make my letters long in proportion to the matter.

1845. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

March 26, 1778.

THOUGH you have desired me to write often at this crisis, and though I am never penurious of my ink, I waited till I could send you something more than rumours. The darkness has not hung long without a thunder-clap. France has stopped all our shipping in their ports, and the omniscient Lord Stormont himself has learnt *that* piece of news at Boulogne, being detained there by the embargo.

LETTER 1844.—¹ The Emperor and domains of the late Elector of the King of Prussia were at war; Bavaria. *Walpole*, the Emperor claiming part of the

It is also expected that the Spanish Chargé des Affaires will to-day or to-morrow compliment the King with an acknowledgement of the States of America, as civilly as Monsieur de Noailles did. It is even said that Portugal allows their title. Well, say you, and are not people frightened? what is to be done? Frightened; yes, some are—some that are guilty, and more that are innocent; most, not at all! for folly, that sees a ghost, always tumbles down a precipice that is before its eyes. But you *will* have some answer, and I *must* tell you what is to be done; that is, I must foresee, *not* what can be done, but what will be. I believe the oracle at Hayes¹ has been consulted, but not having received *carte blanche*, shrouded its dignity in ambiguity. Perhaps to-day more humble ambassadors have been sent: I vow I do not know there have, but the event I guess. The god himself taking the form of his *Pythonisse*, and enveloped in flannels, that are the symbols of vast vigour of mind beneath, will go to Buckingham House, and finding full acquiescence to all his terms (by taking care to ask none really unpalatable), will then present a long list of names that are to be substituted to the proscribed. Lord Rockingham shall go to Ireland, the Duke of Richmond shall be this, Charles Fox shall be t'other, Mr. Burke something else, &c., &c., &c. I mean after Lord Camden, Lord Shelburne, Barré, Dunning, and perhaps the Duke of Grafton have been appointed to the essential posts. 'Certainly,' will be the answer, 'all are very proper.' Madam, the priestess, then notifies to all the nominees the graces she has bestowed, and orders them to take possession of their several departments. They all laugh in her face, and call her a foolish old beldame, and thus a weak opposition is more weakened. *The most concerned* is not very sorry, the only moment is lost; France will tell you the rest.

LETTER 1845.—¹ The Earl of Chatham.

I sit resigned to our fate, for when one can do no good, and is but an individual, it is impertinent to be anything but passive. I am less alarmed too than I should be, because I had the same apprehensions above thirty years ago, and because I had then thirty years longer to live than I have now. In youth, too, imagination's wing flies as far as it can. Experience tells one that all does not happen that may. I think I shall outlive the storm and talk over the ruins; but in truth I believe they will be considerable. France seems to have waited with wise phlegm for the fullness of time, and we may expect that her blows will be stunning. My idea is, that she will invade us here ostensibly, more effectually in Ireland, in America, and in the East. If she has success in all, and we none, why then Lord Mansfield will shake off his mortal coil, and persuade himself that he always meant the destruction of the house of Hanover, not its *unbounded* elevation. These are my sober cool opinions. I shall be glad to be a lying prophet, for Jeremiah himself was a sad fellow if he comforted himself under captivity with the honour of having predicted it.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1846. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

March 27, 1778.

THE war is not yet arrived, though it is certainly at next door, for France laid an embargo on all our vessels in their ports; one may call it, seized them. Lord Stormont himself, though got to Boulogne, is forced to stay there for want of conveyance, or must come round by Holland. This made us stare a little two days ago; but last night I heard that this hostility is conditional, and only a boisterous way of wrenching out of our hands the *Kouli Khan*, a French ship that we had taken, and that Monsieur de Noailles had

reclaimed without success. I doubt we shall take and give so many of these slaps, that the declaration of war may, to save trouble, be reserved to the peace; and then, as Hamlet says,

the funeral baked meats
Will coldly furnish forth the marriage supper.

There was a report, too, that Spain would send us a notification of having made a treaty with the Americans also; but this is contradicted, and their new Ambassador, Almadovar, is said to have received orders to come to us forthwith. In short, rumours of wars beget a thousand other reports. The town has expected a restoration of Lord Chatham; but that notion has subsided too. The best thing I do know is, that we are very seriously occupied in defending ourselves. No more troops are to go to America; we are collecting our whole force; the new-raised regiments will have been an advantageous addition, as they were not embarked; and the militia, which is complete in every county but two, is to take the field. As to America, it will certainly retain its seat amongst the sovereignties of this world: so, Columbus's invasion begins to be set aside; and one quarter of the globe will not be held *in commendam* by another! Imagination could expatiate widely on that chapter—but what have I to do with a new era in the annals of mankind?

Our own old continent, that has so long been ravaged by ambition, is not yet abandoned to the comfort of decay. Yet one now hears that hostilities between the Emperor and Prussia have not commenced, as was said. I doubt that imperial philosopher, who scattered so many humane apophthegms last year at Paris, is a little too impatient to employ his Austrian talons. What a farce to visit hospitals, when one thinks of nothing but stocking them with maimed carcasses! What buckets of blood it costs, before a prince

takes his place at the table of Fame, that might be earned so much better by benevolence! The enemies of mankind arrogate what is due only to the friends.

I was going on perhaps in a string of moralities, but was interrupted by Dr. Monro, who came to tell me that Lord Orford is come to himself. This is such a deliverance to me, that I cannot think of any consequences: indeed, I do not care about them. I have done nothing but what I would repeat to-morrow on the same necessity. His first act of sanity was to write to his rascally steward. The doctor brought me the letter unsealed, and I have sealed it *with my own seal* and sent it. I am sending to all my relations and making the recovery as public as I can; and have desired the doctor to quit my Lord as soon as he possibly can with safety. This is all I shall condescend to do; for if he gives himself up again, as I do not doubt but he will, to the same crew, I scorn to interfere. When the law says he is mad, I will take care of him; when it says he is in his senses, I shall not dispute it. When one does what is rigidly right, one wrongs oneself if one is concerned that others are unjust. Pray notify this lucid interval to the excellent Signora Madre¹. Adieu!

1847. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, March 31, 1778.

I DID think it long, indeed, dear Sir, since I heard from you, and am very sorry the gout was the cause. I hope after such long persecution, you will have less now than you apprehend.

I should not have been silent myself, had I had anything to tell you that you would have cared to hear. Politics have been the only language, and abuse the only expression

LETTER 1846.—¹ The Countess of Orford.

of the winter, neither of which are, or deserve to be, inmates of your peaceable hermitage. I wish, however, they may not have grown so serious as to threaten every retreat with intrusion!

I will let you know when I am settled at Strawberry Hill, and can look over your kind collections relating to Mr. Baker. He certainly deserves his place in the *Biographia*: but I am not surprised that *you* would not submit to *his* being instituted and inducted by a Presbyterian¹. In truth, I, who have not the same zeal against Dissenters, do not at all desire to peruse the history of their apostles; which are generally very uninteresting.

You must excuse the shortness of this, in which, too, I have been interrupted. My nephew is as suddenly recovered as he did last time; and, though I am far from thinking him perfectly in his senses, a great deal of his disorder is removed, which, though it will save me a great deal of trouble, hurries me at present, and forces me to conclude.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1848. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, April 8, 1778.

THOUGH my daily fellow labourers of this morning will give you a minute account of the great event of yesterday, I should be a very negligent gazetteer if I took no notice of it. Lord Chatham fell in the senate—not by daggers, nor by the thunder of Lord Suffolk's eloquence. He had spoken with every symptom of debility, repeated his own phrases, could not recollect his own ideas, and, which was no new practice, persisted in our asserting sovereignty over America,

LETTER 1847.—¹ Dr. Kippis.

though he could not tell by what means. It was only new to confess his ignorance. The Duke of Richmond answered him with much decency and temper, though Lord Chatham had called *pursuit without means* timid and pusillanimous conduct. The Earl was rising to reply, but fell down in a second fit of apoplexy, with strong convulsions and slabbering at the mouth. I do not doubt but the *Morning Post* will allow the Duke more rhetoric than it ever acknowledged, in order to ascribe Lord Chatham's fall to his Grace's invectives; but he, who is all tenderness and sensibility, was so affected, that at night the Duchess¹ desired me not to name it: yet Lord Chatham is not dead, and to-day is better, if existing after two strokes can be called so. To be sure his biographer would have a fairer field, had he died in his vocation. In truth, I see no good he could have done, since he has embraced the idea of still conquering America; but much harm he must have occasioned had the court adopted him. Now I reckon him politically dead. He will probably neither recover strength nor faculties; his family will if possible prevent his reappearance, and the court will scarce inoculate a half-dead skeleton on their other infirmities. Lord Chatham certainly went to the House to express resentment at their having only dabbled with him indirectly, but his debility, or perhaps some gleam of hope of being yet adopted, moderated his style: his water-gall Lord Temple was at his elbow.

I can tell you nothing definitive on war or peace. Pacification with France, and even with America, has been much sounded these last days, probably to prop the stocks; but the selection of Governor Johnstone for one of the Commissioners, who even during all the late debates anathematized American independence, implies not only adherence to sovereignty but no thoughts of change. Of Johnstone

LETTER 1848.—¹ The Duchess of Richmond.

it is enough to say, that though a Scot in opposition, he never lost sight of the promised land.

You may thank me for so much politics when I am overwhelmed with other business, and have even the militia on my hands. My nephew is suddenly come to himself again—only to his former self; but I must not tap this chapter—I should be endless. He is gone to take the command of the Norfolk militia, and I am commissioned to dissuade him! *De profundis clamavi!* Well, fortune has some justice and dispenses antidotes with poisons. The Duke of Gloucester's children are to have a Parliamentary provision, and, considering everything, a very decent one. There is one thorn removed. I have recourse to my old anodynes, quartos, whenever I can snatch a moment. I have gone through Mr. Pennant's *Welsh Tour*, which is a patchwork of all sorts of shreds stitched together with unpronounceable words, of DDwrr's and no vowels, so I do not remember much of what I cannot articulate. I have dipped into Mr. Warton's second volume², which seems more unentertaining than the former. I perceive he excommunicates Rowley totally. Lord Hardwicke is to present us on Saturday with two volumes of State Papers, but with due circumspection keeps back his by far most curious letters. I have a long conversation with Dr. Robertson to relate to you, but must reserve for some moment of more leisure. It would not be time lost to come to me for a week and hear me exhaust my wallet: you must not reckon upon too distant moments! My tattered frame grows weaker and weaker. I waste as few minutes as possible, but constant application of the mind to some duties or other will impair a memory that is enclosed in so frail an *étui*. Have you seen *The Old Baron*³, a Gothic

² The second volume of the *History of Poetry*.

³ *The Old English Baron*, by Clara Reeve (1729–1807).

story, professedly written in imitation of *Otranto*, but reduced to reason and probability! It is so probable, that any trial for murder at the Old Bailey would make a more interesting story. Mrs. Barbut's⁴ *Fragment* was excellent. This is a *caput mortuum*. Adieu. I have not a quarter of a minute to say more.

1849. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Thursday, April 9th, 1778.

I AM not going to announce more war than by my last: it seems to sleep, like a *paroli* at faro, and be reserved for another deal. Though I write oftener than usual, I have not a full cargo every time; but I have two novel events to send you. The newspapers indeed anticipate many of my articles; but, as I suppose you pay me the compliment of opening my letters before the *Gazettes*, I shall be the first to inform you, though but by five minutes. Lord Chatham has again appeared in the House of Lords, and probably for the last time. He was there on Tuesday, against the earnest remonstrance of his physician; and, I think, only to make confusion worse confounded. He had intended to be very hostile to the ministers, and yet to force himself into all their places by maintaining the sovereignty of America, to which none of the opposition but his own few followers adhere; and they cannot, like a strolling company in a barn, fill all the parts of a drama with four or five individuals. It appeared early in his speech that he had lost himself; he did not utter half he intended, and sat down: but, rising to reply to the Duke of Richmond, he fell down in an apoplectic fit, and was thought dead. They transported him into the Jerusalem Chamber, and laid him on a table. In twenty minutes he

⁴ Mrs. Barbauld; according to Mitford this was *Don Bertrand*: a *Fragment*.

recovered his senses, and was carried to a messenger's house adjoining, where he still remains. The scene was very affecting; his two sons¹, and son-in-law, Lord Mahon, were round him. The House paid a proper mark of respect by adjourning instantly.

The same incertitude remains on our general situation. I pretend to tell you facts only, not reasonings; and therefore will say no more now on the public. One event, indeed, of Parliamentary complexion touches my private feelings very particularly. The King has demanded a provision for his younger children, and has been so good as to add the Duke's to the list—nobly too, both from the proportion and the circumstances of the times. The King's sons are to have ten thousand a year each, his daughters six, Prince William eight, and Princess Sophia four. Thus, both income and rank are ascertained. This is a great thorn extracted from all our sides, and I trust will have good influence on his Royal Highness's health.

I am debarrassed (not in so comfortable a way) of my nephew. He has resumed the entire dominion of himself, and is gone into the country, and intends to command the militia. I have done all I could, when scarce anything was in my power, to prevent it; but in vain. He has even asked to be a major-general, which officers of militia cannot be. What a humiliation to know he is thus exposing himself, and not dare to interpose! Yet is he not ignorant of his situation. He said the other day to his Dalilah, speaking of Dr. Monro, 'Patty, I like this doctor! don't you? We

LETTER 1849.—¹ John Pitt (1756–1835), Viscount Pitt, eldest son of first Earl of Chatham, whom he succeeded on May 11, 1778; entered the army in 1774; full General, 1812; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1788–94.

Hon. William Pitt (1759–1806),

second son of first Earl of Chatham; entered Parliament as M.P. for Appleby, 1781; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1782–83; First Lord of the Treasury (Prime Minister) and Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1783–1801; First Lord of the Treasury (Prime Minister), 1804–6.

will have him *next time*.' What an amazing compost of sense, insensibility, and frenzy! His recovery was as marvellous. He waked, could scarce articulate, and thought himself paralytic. The keeper gave him a common apothecary's draught. In a quarter of an hour he said, 'What have you given me? It has removed a weight from my head'—and thence talked rationally. It seems to me to indicate that frenzy is occasioned by a gathering of matter or water that presses on the brain and disorders it, and that what he felt as paralytic, was the crisis preceding an internal discharge. It even looks in him as if it took the same time to come to maturity. Last fit lasted under or about thirteen months; this not quite twelve—I hope the next will be as long gathering as the last, three years! Finding him so little affected by his situation, I ventured to preach temperance and quiet to him; told him how many many years he might live with care, and painted my own age and weakness, and my brother's greater age; that he might be assured we have too much sense to propose surviving him—but, alas! they who knew he was mad before we did, took care to sow seeds of distrust, that all my care and tenderness will as little remove as my reasoning. Well; be it so; right is right, whatever success it has or not. I hope other mad persons will find benefit from my conduct—and then I shall never think it thrown away. If he knew how little I reckon on my own life, he could not suspect me of looking to reversions. His crew would rejoice at the shocks my anxiety about him have given to my constitution; for though I never pretended to tenderness, for which in his life he never gave me cause, the fatigues and disquiet have sapped so frail a tenement as mine—my prospects are far from being distant! They did extend to my family—have been often torn up violently, have as often sprung up again—now perhaps it is as wise,

both on public and private [grounds], to adopt that forced and selfish philosophy (that never grows naturally on comfort) of saying to oneself, 'Well, my time is near elapsed; what signifies what one shall not know?'—With the leave of Monsr. de la Rochefoucault, however self-love may enter masked into all our actions, I cannot believe that many have the impudence to own it even to themselves—for myself, I am sure, I must be hard driven, whenever I take up with myself as the sole object of my views! Adieu!

1850. TO EARL HARCOURT.

April 16, 1778.

It is at the bottom of the first volume of the notes to p. 346 of Warton's second volume, that your Lordship will find how the Erle of Harcourt served the Kyng of his spyce-plate. That Kyng was the real, not nominal, Kyng of France. Will not this piece of intelligence entitle me at least to the post of Harcourt-Pursuivant?

I am very ambitious of serving that most ancient and noble house, to which I am bounden by inclination, zeal, and gratitude; and though I am not thought worthy of being *Printer* to it, I will never miss any occasion of showing myself

Lord and Lady Harcourt's

Most devoted humble servant.

1851. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, April 18, 1778.

I AM come hither like a good Christian to pass in retreat the holy week before Easter, and the unholy week of Newmarket, which has almost beaten Easter out of the calendar, and to which yet I would give a Scripture appella-

tion, and call it the *passover*. In these ten days I shall probably fulfil my promise of sending you the heads of my interview with Dr. Robertson; but I will tell you first the little else I have to say. Most people expect a French war: I still doubt it, I do not very well know why, but it does not seem a very decisive age. The Turks and Russians have not yet drawn blood. I take the Emperor to be the most impatient to be a Cæsar, and his mother, I suppose, is very ready to employ him at a distance from home.

The Commissioners are gone, and Mr. Adams¹ is arrived at Paris. As we do not know the amount of their treaty, all we do is in the dark. I suspect that Dr. Franklin has duped Governor Johnstone, and yet many a dishonest man has been made a fool, as well as many an honest one.

The opposition are notoriously split into two factions. Lord Shelburne heads the Chathamites, and puts me in mind of a French beggar, who asked charity as one of the *Quinze-Vingt aveugles*; 'Why,' said the person he applied to, 'you are not blind!' 'Hélas! non, monsieur,' said the fellow, 'je ne suis qu'un aspirant.'

The Foleys are at last likely to lose their cause² by the

LETTER 1851.—¹ John Adams, who replaced Silas Deane as American Commissioner in Paris.

² Lord Foley and his brother applied to Parliament to have their father's will set aside in order that they might be able to pay the principal of their debts. 'They were so popular: and Charles Fox, whose example and society had contributed to their ruin, and for whom they were bound too for above 40,000*l.*, and the rest of the young nobility at Almack's, and the fashionable young women of quality, who were Lady Henrietta's* friends, pushed the affair with so much vehemence,

that even Lord Mansfield and Lord Camden, though condemning the cause and still more the fatal precedent of setting aside wills, determined to absent themselves and let the bill pass. But the Duke of Richmond, though pitying Lady Henrietta, uncle of and connected in party with Charles Fox, and inclined to favour the Foleys, was too upright and honest to bear this time-serving of the two great lawyers, and when the bill was presented, insisted on their attending it, that he might from them learn what he ought to do. They both endeavoured to avoid it. . . . The honest Duke would not

* Wife of Lord Foley.

indecent impetuosity of their partisans. If you have not seen it in the papers, you will. Oh, I have begun my letter on a torn sheet, but I cannot write it over again, and so shall proceed. Yes, you will thank me for an admirable *bon mot* of George Selwyn. When the Foleys had more chance of cancelling their father's will, he said, 'The New Testament will now be more favourable to the Jews than the Old.'

There is a pretty poem just published called *The Wreath of Fashion*: it is written by one Tickell³, a son of Addison's friend. He has been an assistant at Eton, and wrote this winter another poem at least as good, called *The Project*. The conclusion of the new is very inferior to the rest, and ends absurdly, like Anstey's on Lord Tavistock⁴, with a hemistich; and as absurdly with a panegyric on that water-gruel bard Shenstone, who never wrote anything good but his *Schoolmistress*. *The Wreath* is a satire on sentimental poets, amongst whom, still more absurdly, he classes Charles Fox; but there is a great deal of wit *par cy, par là*. He calls sentimental comedies *dramatic homilies*; says Lord Palmerston *fineers* (what an admirable word!) rebus's and charades with chips of poetry; and when Lord of the Admiralty, like Ariel, wrecked navies with a song—sure that is an excellent application.

I have very near finished Warton, but, antiquary as I am, it was a tough achievement. He has dipped into an incredible ocean of dry and obsolete authors of the dark ages, and has brought up more rubbish than riches, but the

accept their excuses, but insisted on their naming a day when they could attend, which they were forced to do. For this, as usual, he was grievously abused; and the beautiful Countesses of Sefton and Barrymore, Lady Foley's sisters, said everything that rage could suggest of him.'

(*Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 226.)

³ Richard Tickell (1751–1793), grandson, not son, of Addison's friend, Thomas Tickell.

⁴ An elegy on the death of the Marquis of Tavistock, published in 1767.

latter chapters, especially on the progress and revival of the theatre, are more entertaining; however it is very fatiguing to wade through the muddy poetry of three or four centuries that had never a poet.

Have you heard how Voltaire has been at his own Apotheosis? He has literally been crowned with laurel in a side box at his *Irène*, and seen the actors and actresses decorate his bust with garlands on the stage. As he is so very old, one must excuse his submitting to this vanity; nay, it must have been moving,—yet one is more charmed with the *violette, qui se cache sous l'herbe* ⁵.

As Lord and Lady Strafford are to drink tea here this evening, I shall desire my Lord to frank this modicum, that you may not pay for a scrap that has nothing in it. My conversation with the Scottish historian is as little worth, especially after I had prepared you for expecting it. When do you quit your cathedral for your parish? I shall not leave my little hill for the dinner at the Royal Academy on Thursday, only to figure the next day in the newspapers in the list of the Mécénas's of the age. Lady Di Beauclerk has drawn the portrait of the Duchess of Devonshire, and it has been engraved by Bartolozzi. A Castalian nymph conceived by Sappho, and executed by Myron, would not have had more grace and simplicity; it is the divinity of Venus piercing the veil of immortality, when

*roseâ cervice refulsit,
Ambrosiaeque comae divinum vertice odorem
Spiravere.*

The likeness is perfectly preserved, except that the paintress has lent her own expression to the Duchess, which you will allow is very agreeable flattery. What should I go to the Royal Academy for? I shall see no such *chefs-d'œuvre* there.

⁵ See letter of Madame de Sévigné to Madame de Grignan, Dec. 1, 1680.

1852. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

[1778.]

THE purport of Dr. Robertson's visit was to inquire where he could find materials for the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, which he means to write as a supplement to David Hume. I had heard of his purpose, but did not own I knew it, that my discouragement might seem the more natural. I do not care a straw what he writes about the Church's wet-nurse, Goody Anne; but no Scot is worthy of being the historian of William, but Dr. Watson.

When he had told me his object, I said, 'Write the reign of King William, Dr. Robertson! That is a great task! I look on him as the greatest man of modern times since his ancestor William Prince of Orange.' I soon found the Doctor had very little idea of him, or had taken upon trust the pitiful partialities of Dalrymple and Macpherson. I said, 'Sir, I do not doubt but King William came over with a view to the crown; nor was he called upon by patriotism, for he was not an Englishman, to assert our liberties. No; his patriotism was of a higher rank. He aimed not at the crown of England from ambition, but to employ its forces and wealth against Louis XIV for the common cause of the liberties of Europe. The Whigs did not understand the extent of his views, and the Tories betrayed him. He has been thought not to have understood us; but the truth was, he took either party as it was predominant, that he might sway the Parliament to support his general plan.' The Doctor, suspecting that I doubted his principles being enlarged enough to do justice to so great a character, told me he himself had been born and bred a Whig, though he owned he was *now* a moderate one: I believe, a very moderate one. I said Macpherson had

done great injustice to another hero, the Duke of Marlborough, whom he accuses of betraying the design on Brest to Louis XIV. The truth was, as I heard often in my youth from my father, my uncle, and old persons who had lived in those times, that the Duke trusted the Duchess with the secret, and she her sister the popish Duchess of Tyrconnel, who was as poor and as bigoted as a church mouse. A corroboration of this was the wise and sententious answer of King William to the Duke, whom he taxed with having betrayed the secret. 'Upon my honour, Sir,' said the Duke, 'I told it to nobody but my wife.' 'I did not tell it to mine!' said the King.

I added, that Macpherson's and Dalrymple's invidious scandals really serve but to heighten the amazing greatness of the King's genius; for, if they say true, he maintained the crown on his head, though the nobility, the churchmen, the country gentlemen, the people were against him; and though almost all his own ministers betrayed him. 'But,' said I, 'nothing is so silly as to suppose that the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Godolphin ever meant seriously to restore King James. Both had offended him too much to expect forgiveness, especially from so remorseless a nature. Yet a re-Revolution was so probable, that it is no wonder they kept up a correspondence with him, at least to break their fall if he returned. But as they never did effectuate the least service in his favour, when they had the fullest power, nothing can be inferred but King James's folly in continuing to lean on them. To imagine they meant to sacrifice his weak daughter, whom they governed absolutely, to a man who was sure of being governed by others, one must have as little sense as James himself had.'

The precise truth I take to have been this. Marlborough and Godolphin both knew the meanness and credulity of

James's character. They knew that he must be ever dealing for partisans ; and they might be sure, that if he could hope for support from the General and the Lord-Treasurer, he must be less solicitous for more impotent supporters. 'Is it impossible,' said I to the Doctor, 'but they might correspond with the King even by Anne's own consent ? Do not be surprised, Sir,' said I : 'such things have happened. My own father often received letters from the Pretender, which he always carried to George II and had them endorsed by his Majesty. I myself have seen them countersigned by the King's own hand.'

In short, I endeavoured to impress him with proper ideas of his subject, and painted to him the difficulties, and the want of materials. But the booksellers will out-argue me, and the Doctor will forget his education. *Panem et Circenses*, if you will allow me to use the latter for those that are captivated by favour in the *circle*, will decide his writing and give the colour. I once wished he should write the History of King William ; but his *Charles V* and his *America* have opened my eyes, and the times have shut his. Adieu !

1853. TO CHARLES BEDFORD.

DEAR SIR,

Strawberry Hill, April 23, 1778.

I shall be much obliged to you if you will call to-morrow evening at the Somerset House Coffee-house, and inquire into the truth of the enclosed advertisement ; and if you find it a true case, I will beg you to pay what money is wanted, or the whole thirty-nine shillings if no other money has been sent. I will make you no excuse for giving you this trouble, as I am sure you will execute the commission with pleasure.

Yours sincerely,

H. W.

1854. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, April 23, 1778.

I THANK you, dear Sir, for the notice of William de Worcestre's¹ appearance, and will send for my book as soon as I go to town, which will not be till next week. I have been here since Friday as much a hermit as yourself. I wanted air and quiet, having been much fatigued on my nephew's amendment, trying to dissuade him from making the campaign with his militia; but in vain! I now dread hearing of some eccentric freak.

I am sorry Mr. Tyson has quite dropped me, though he sometimes comes to town. I am still more concerned at your frequent disorders—I hope their chief seat 'is unwillingness to move.

Your 'Bakeriana' will be very welcome about June: I shall not be completely resident here till then; at least not have leisure, as May is the month in which I have most visits from town.

As few spare hours as I have, I have contrived to go through Mr. Pennant's *Welsh Tour*, and Mr. Warton's second volume; both which come within the circle of your pursuits. I have far advanced, too, in Lord Hardwicke's first volume of State Papers. I have yet found nothing that opens a new scene, or sets the old in a new light; yet they are rather amusing, though not in proportion to the bulk of the volumes. One likes to hear actors speak for themselves—but, on the other hand, they use a great many more words than are necessary; and when one knows the events from history, it is a little tiresome to go back to the details and the delays.

LETTER 1854.—¹ *Itineraria Symonis quibus accedit tractatus de Metro, Simeonis et Willelmi de Worcestre,* edited by James Nasmyth.

I should be glad to employ Mr. Essex on my offices; but the impending war with France deters me. It is not a season for expense! I could like to leave my little castle complete: but, though I am only a spectator, I cannot be as indifferent to the melancholy aspect of the times, as the country gentleman was, who was going out with his hounds as the two armies at Edge Hill were going to engage! I wish for peace and tranquillity, and should be glad to pass my remaining hours in the idle and retired amusements I love, and without any solicitude for my country. Adieu.

Yours most sincerely,

H. WALPOLE.

1855. TO EDWARD GIBBON.

DEAR SIR,

[1778.]

I have gone through your Inquisitor's¹ attack, and am far from being clear that it deserves your giving yourself the trouble of an answer, as neither the detail nor the result affects your argument. So far from it, many of his reproofs are levelled at your having quoted a wrong page; he confessing often that what you have cited is in the author referred to, but not precisely in the individual spot. If St. Peter is attended by a corrector of the press, you will certainly never be admitted where he is a porter. I send you my copy, because I scribbled my remarks. I do not send them with the impertinent presumption of suggesting a hint to you, but to prove I did not grudge the trouble of going through such a book when you desired it, and to show how little struck me as of any weight.

LETTER 1855.—Misplaced by C. amongst letters of Dec. 1778.

¹ Henry Edwards Davis (1756–1784), of Balliol College, Oxford. In the spring of 1778 he published an

Examination of the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. Gibbon replied in a *Vindication* published in Jan. 1779.

I have set down nothing on your imputed plagiarisms; for, if they are so, no argument that has ever been employed must be used again, even where the passage necessary is applied to a different purpose. An author is not allowed to be master of his own works; but, by Davis's new law, the first person that cites him would be so. You probably looked into Middleton, Dodwell², &c.; had the same reflections on the same circumstances, or conceived them so as to recollect them, without remembering what suggested them. Is this plagiarism? If it is, Davis and such cavillers might go a short step further, and insist that an author should peruse every work antecedently written on every subject at all collateral to his own—not to assist him, but to be sure to avoid every material touched by his predecessors.

I will make but one remark on such divine champions. Davis and his prototypes tell you Middleton, &c., have used the same objections, and they have been *confuted*: *answering*, in the theologic dictionary, signifying *confuting*; no matter whether there is sense, argument, truth in the answer or not.

Upon the whole, I think ridicule is the only answer such a work is entitled to. The ablest answer which you can make (which would be the ablest answer that could be made) would never have any authority with the cabal, yet would allow a sort of dignity to the author. His patrons will always maintain that he vanquished you, unless you made him too ridiculous for them to dare to revive his name. You might divert yourself, too, with Alma Mater, the Church, employing a *goujat* to defend the citadel, while the generals repose in their tents. If Irenæus, St. Augustine, &c., did not set apprentices and proselytes

² Probably William Dodwell, D.D. (1709–1785), theological writer and controversialist.

to combat Celsus and the adversaries of the new religion—but early bishops had not five or six thousand pounds a year.

In short, dear Sir, I wish you not to lose your time; that is, either not reply, or set *your mark* on your answer, that it may always be read with the rest of your works.

1856. TO EARL HARCOURT.

May 6, 1778.

THE space for the inscription on which your Lordship does me the honour of consulting me, I do not remember to have seen, and yet I am far from objecting to it, as it is quite in the *esprit du gothique*. The person, however, who drew it, is not correct, especially in his trefoils. He ought to copy the pattern exactly, of which there are many in Dart's *Westminster* or *Canterbury*. If the figures are painted, the arms must be so too; and then I should like to have the whole tomb enlivened with gold and azure. Mr. T. Pitt would sketch the Gothic part for your Lordship better than anybody, or so would Sandby next.

Pray do not give yourself the trouble, my dear Lord, this week of calling, unless you have a moment to-morrow, for I go to Strawberry on Friday. I would not take the liberty of mentioning to-morrow, if I had not something to show you, that I cannot bring to you, and that would pay your pains.

Your Lordship's most devoted,

H. WALPOLE.

1857. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 9, 1778.

As I have engaged myself to stock your impatience with frequent intelligence, you may think a month's interval

a kind of breach of promise ; but though I write to display my diligence, it is not to convey any event. You yourself have told us all the fact we know ; at least, the newspapers have done *you* the honour of sending the information of the sailing of the Toulon squadron—not in terms ; but they say an express arrived from Sir H. Mann without eating, drinking, or sleeping ; and we know nothing else—I mean we, the people,—that corresponds with the date of such importance. Pray can you tell whether our fleet is gone after it ? For the newspapers would persuade us that Lord Sandwich has detained it at Portsmouth, to divert their Majesties¹, as if they loved shows better than dominions.

We shall be in no want of sights this summer : every county will have a camp of its own ; the coasts will be amused with sieges. An American privateer² has attempted Whitehaven, and plundered Lord Selkirk's³ house. This is a little ungrateful, for the Americans certainly owe their independence to the Scots ; though, to be sure, in strictness it was not what the Scots intended for them. They have done, or will do us some good too, though perhaps with as little design ; for I think we shall be forced to come to our senses. Great countries ought always to be physicked and dieted after long peace or a course of victories ; for prosperity either breeds humours in the body, or flies to the head : the first produce tumours, and the latter *absolute* madness.

Lord Chatham has been at the point of death, but is said

LETTER 1857.—¹ The King and Queen visited Portsmouth early in May 1778.

² The *Ranger*, commanded by the naval adventurer, Paul Jones (1747–1792). He landed on St. Mary's Isle in Kirkcudbright Bay with the intention of kidnapping Lord Selkirk, who was absent. Some silver plate was taken away by Jones' men, but was afterwards bought by

Jones, and returned to Lady Selkirk. One of the articles was a silver teapot, which was taken straight from the breakfast table. When the plate was returned five years later, the tea-leaves were still in the teapot ! (Information from Hon. J. A. Home.)

³ Dunbar Douglas (1722–1799), fourth Earl of Selkirk.

to be better. It is not very likely, however, that he should recover enough to come forth again. You tell me his sister⁴ is at Florence. Her friends, the Butes, have a new calamity in their family, for which I pity them: Lady Percy⁵ is breeding, and the suit for a divorce is commenced. Lady Bute has been very unfortunate in her children, though there never was a better or more discreet mother. Lady Percy is very weak; and some time ago, when Lady Bute received some intimation on her conduct, she said, 'Upon my word, I have not room in my head for that misfortune!'

I have told you all I know of my nephew. He is now occupied with his militia—whether it will overset him again, or make him a hero, I cannot tell. I endeavour to think on him as little as I can: philosophy is excusable, when every exertion is vain!

Let me ask if you gave *your* nephew any parcel of my letters. Why does he not return directly? He would find enough here to dissipate him. He should marry again—not that I would recommend a wife to him—yet depend upon it, we shall grow a soberer people.

Though I write this on the Saturday, it cannot depart till Tuesday. Probably I shall have little to add. Next month will be more prolific of intelligence. Yet make no account of my auguries. I have lived too long, and have been too often mistaken in my calculations, to trust my own reason or that of others. Half our conjectures are built on Ignorance, and her sister Chance governs the rest.

My mind is a little one, and apt to fluctuate. I answer for nothing but my principles, and never committed them to the guidance of events; so, though my letters may have

⁴ Miss Anne Pitt.

⁵ Lady Anne Stuart, third daughter of third Earl of Bute; m. (1764) Hugh Percy, Earl Percy, eldest son

of first Duke of Northumberland, from whom she was divorced in March 1779.

been affected by the weather-glass, the sum total has been uniform. I have hoped or feared; but always in the same spirit—the liberty and happiness of England.

Arlington Street, 11th.

I must unsay a material passage in my letter: Lord Chatham died this morning! I am of opinion Lord Temple died at the same moment, or had better think he did. We shall have opportunities of seeing whether the mantle of the former is descended upon anybody! Lord Shelburne will probably pretend that it was a legacy to him; but, without Lord Chatham's *fortune* too, a *cloak* will be of little use. Well! with all his defects, Lord Chatham will be a capital historic figure. France dreaded his crutch to this very moment; but I doubt she does not think that it has left a stick of the wood!—no offence to Mrs. Anne, who, I allow, has great parts, and not less ambition: but *Fortune* did not treat her as a twin.

Tuesday morning.

Last night the House of Commons voted a funeral and monument to Lord Chatham at the public expense, and the members are to walk at the burial.

1858. TO THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

May 10, 1778.

I do assure you, Madam, your Royal Highness is totally mistaken about Lord Ch.¹, whom I have not seen this month. I received my account from no relation or friend, but from a gentleman of the strictest honour, who came to me as not knowing else how to convey the information to you. I will upon no account name him, as I gave him my word I would not. I am extremely happy there is no truth in

LETTER 1858.—¹ Possibly Lord Cholmondeley.

the idea, though it came to me in so serious a manner and from a man so incapable of an ill meaning, that it was my duty to acquaint you with it ; and as I desired to be named to your daughters, they will know how kind my intention was, and that I am, as I have professed to them, as affectionate as if I was their father.

I shall be very glad, Madam, of your brother's² picture, and will try to find a place for it ; but it is far from being the only near relation of whom I have no portrait—I have none of Lord Dysart, of the Bishop³, of Lady Malpas, of Mr. and Mrs. Cholmondeley, of Lady Cadogan, &c.—and therefore the remark of the persons that observed your brother's being wanting, was not very good-natured to him or me. Many of the family pictures I happened to have ; others I begged as I wanted them for particular places ; and, indeed, furnished my house to please myself, not to please such people as those who have been so obliging as to tell your Royal Highness that my not having your brother's picture was a mark of contempt. I have no desire of pleasing those who were capable of saying such a thing to you. Your affection for his memory is most amiable, and I shall obey you with pleasure ; but allow me to say, Madam, that I hope you will always judge of me by what you know of me, and not from comments of others. I have been taxed with partiality for *you*, long before there was a question of your present rank ; nor do I believe you suspect me of attachment to you from that motive. I am too old, too independent, and too contented, to have hopes or fears from anybody. I have the highest respect for his Royal Highness's character and virtues, and always shall have ; and am proud of paying my court to him, when it

² Edward Walpole the younger ;
d. 1771.

Horace Walpole's nephew by marriage.

³ The late Bishop of Exeter,

can only flow from personal reverence. Were he in the situation he ought to be, I should be but the less anxious to show it.

Indeed I little expected to be suspected of wanting attachment to any part of my family. I have been laughed at, perhaps deservedly, for family pride, which certainly is not always a proof of family affection. I trust I have given proofs that they are not disunited in me; and yet, except from my father, I never received either benefits or favours; and from him only my places, and a small fortune not paid. Thus, whatever I have, except my share of Mr. Shorter's⁴ fortune that came to me by his leaving no will, and consequently was no obligation, I neither received from my family nor owe to it. It has been saved by my own prudence, is my own to dispose of as I please, and, however I distribute it, or to whom, will be a gift, not a claim.

I should not say thus much, Madam, but when any one can think it worth while to make invidious remarks to you on a tender point with you, on what is or is not in my house, you will allow me to justify myself, and even open my heart to you, to whom I desire it should be known, though I certainly owe no account to anybody on so trifling a subject as the furniture of a house which I am master to do what I please with, living or dead. It was from no disregard for your brother that I had not his picture. I love Lady Cadogan very much, as I do, surely, your daughters and nieces, yet have not happened to have their pictures: and though I have probably said a great deal too much, like an old man, it is always a mark of affection when I submit myself on an unjust accusation; and as tenderness for my family is the duty in which I have in my whole life been the least culpable, though very blamable in a thousand other respects, it is very pardonable to be

⁴ Erasmus Shorter, uncle of Horace Walpole; d. 1753.

circumstantial and prolix to her whose reproach was kind and good, and whom I desire to convince that I have neither wanted affection for my family, nor am unjust to it. I have the honour to be, Madam, your Royal Highness's most faithful, humble servant.

1859. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

May 12, 1778.

I now and then write a letter for, rather than to, you ; that is, when they will bear delay, and be equally fresh, and when they contain anecdotes that I do not care to send by the post if they are too personal, and I have not a prospect of sudden conveyance. The following will have all these ingredients, and will rather be an epitome of the manners of the time, than a letter. The characteristics of the age are frenzy, folly, extravagance, and insensibility ; no wonder when such stars are predominant, that ruin both stalks on, and is not felt or apprehended.

About ten days ago I wanted a housemaid, and one presented herself very well recommended. I said, ' But, young woman, why do you leave your present place ? ' She said she could not support the hours she kept ; that her lady never went to bed till three or four in the morning. ' Bless me, child,' said I, ' why, you tell me you live with a bishop's wife : I never heard that Mrs. North¹ gamed or raked so late.' ' No, Sir,' said she, ' but she is three hours undressing.' Upon my word, the edifice that takes three hours to demolish must at least be double the time in fabricating ! Would not you for once sit up till morning to see the destruction of the pyramid and distribution of the

LETTER 1859. — ¹ Henrietta (d. 1796), daughter of John Bannister, and wife of Hon. and Rev. Brown-

low North, at this time Bishop of Worcester.

materials? Do not mention this, for I did not take the girl, and she still assists at the daily and nightly revolutions of Babel.

On Tuesday I supped after the Opera at Mrs. Meynel's with a set of the most fashionable company, which, take notice, I very seldom do now, as I certainly am not of the age to mix often with young people. Lady Melbourne was standing before the fire, and adjusting her feathers in the glass, says she, 'Lord! they say the stocks will blow up: that will be very comical.'

These would be features for comedy, if they would not be thought caricatures, but to-day I am possessed of a genuine paper, that I believe I shall leave to the Museum, and which, though its object will, I suppose, to-morrow become record, cannot be believed authentic an hundred years hence. It would in such a national satire as *Gulliver* be deemed too exaggerated. In short, Lord Foley and his brother have petitioned the House of Lords to set aside their father's will, as it seems he intended to have raised an hundred thousand pounds to pay their debts, but died before he could execute his intention. All the Ladies Melbournes and all the bishops' wives that kill their servants by vigils are going about the town lamenting these poor orphans, and soliciting the peers to redress their grievances; but no words, no ridicule, can attain to the ridiculous pathetic of the printed case itself, which now lies before me, and of which the four first lines are these—upon my honour they are exactly these:—

'The present Lord Foley and his brother Mr. Edward Foley having contracted large bond debts to the amount of about —*l.*, and encumbered themselves by granting annuities for their lives to the amount of about seventeen thousand four hundred and fifty pounds a *year*, explained their situation to their father the late Lord ——.'

Poor unfortunate children ! before thirty, the eldest had spent an estate (to the possession of which he was not arrived) of twenty thousand a year ; at least, forfeited his father's affections, who left him but six thousand a year and a palace ; and the youngest brother had been dipped in the same extravagance with him, and the legislature is desired to set aside so just a punishment, and if it does will deserve that every lad in England should waste his father's estate before his face. Tell it not in Gath, where all the shekels that ever were in the country would give no idea of the debt, though Jews are the creditors ! Burn your sermon instead of printing it. Do you think you can preach up to the enormities of the times ? Hyperbole is baffled, and if the fine ladies of Jerusalem were so gallant that the prophets were obliged to pass all bounds of decency in censuring Duchess Aholah and Countess Aholibah, where would they have found figures even in Eastern rhetoric to paint the enormity of two sons *explaining to their father* that they paid seventeen thousand pounds a year to usurers for money they had borrowed to pay gaming debts ? and what tropes, what metaphors drawn from asses would describe a Sanhedrim that suffered such a petition to be laid before it ?

These have been my collections in a single fortnight in the flagrancy of a civil war. History shall not revert to Athens for decrees against diverting the revenues of the theatre to the service of the state. London shall be the storehouse hereafter, whence declamations shall be drawn on the infatuation of falling empires. Nay, so potent is the intoxication, that in two companies this evening I have been thought singular for seeing *this petition* in the light I do : at York perhaps I may not be held so antediluvian in my opinions. With such obsolete prejudices I certainly am not very proper at modern suppers, yet with such *entremets*

one would not wholly miss them. Nations at the acme of their splendour, or at the eve of their destruction, are worth observing. When they grovel in obscurity afterwards, they furnish neither events nor reflections; strangers visit the vestiges of the Acropolis, or may come to dig for capitals among the ruins of St. Paul's; but nobody studies the manners of the pedlars and banditti, that dwell in mud huts within the precincts of a demolished temple. Curio and Clodius are memorable as they paved the way to the throne of Cæsar, but equal scoundrels are not entitled to infamy after a constitution is overturned. What we shall retain, I do not conjecture. The constitution might recover—the nation cannot; but though its enemies have miscarried in their attacks on the former, is there sense or virtue enough left to restore it, though the assailants have betrayed such wretched, despicable incapacity? Unless sudden inspiration should seize the whole island, and make it with one voice invite Dr. Franklin to come over and new-model the Government, it will crumble away in the hands that still hold it. They feel, they own their insufficiency. Everybody is sensible of it, and everybody seems to think, like Lady Melbourne, that if we are blown up it will be very comical.

1860. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, May 15, 1778.

I HAVE gulped my anger at your silence, or at least adjourned it till I have less disposition to speak, that I may chat with you on all that has happened since I wrote last Saturday. The first thing I heard on landing in Arlington Street was Lord Chatham's death, which in truth I thought of no great consequence, but to himself; for either he would have remained where he was, or been

fetches out to do what he could not do,—replace us once more on the throne of Neptune. The House of Commons has chosen to make his death an epoch, which is to draw the line between our prosperity and adversity. They bury him, and father his children. In this fit of gratitude two men chose not to be involved, but voted against attending his funeral; one was the Archbishop of Canterbury¹, who owed the tiara to him; the other, Lord Onslow, who formerly used to wait in the lobby to help him on with his great-coat.

Yesterday teemed with events: a compromise on the Irish bills² was made and broken. Then Sir George Saville moved for taking off pressures from the Roman Catholics, which charmed every soul on both sides; and I suppose the Papists will soon be admitted *ad eundem*.

Next arrived General Burgoyne. I don't know whether he was surprised or not, but he received a prohibition of appearing at court; and a Board of General Officers is appointed to sit on his conduct. Luckily we have enough to spare, though French and Spaniards should land in twenty places; for next came an account of Marshal Broglie being appointed Commander-in-Chief on the coasts of the ocean. The *ubi* of the Toulon squadron is not ascertained. That of Brest has thirty frigates, and the Spanish ten thousand men on board, so you may prophesy at your pleasure.

I say nothing of an interlude which nobody has leisure to think on, and is a great way off in a certain little empire we have, or had, called India, where Mr. Hastings³

LETTER 1860.—¹ Dr. Cornwallis.

² Bills by which it was proposed to remove some of the restrictions on Irish trade.

³ Warren Hastings (1732–1818), at this time Governor-General of India. The events referred to took

place early in 1777, when Hastings heard that his agents in London had handed in his resignation. On learning this, General Clavering, the Commander-in-Chief, assumed the office of Governor-General, and demanded the keys of Fort William.

had deposed General Clavering by the plenitude of his power before the latter's death.

I thought these accidents were sufficient for one week, and came out of town this morning as tranquilly as if I were a minister; so I hold my own philosophy full as high as any stoic in Yorkshire. It does require some command of temper to sit still and see a general wreck approaching,—I mean for one that expects and thinks on it. I know I might go to Ranelagh, and Newmarket, and exhibitions, and say, with Pope,

Whatever is, is right.

But I am forced to seek other consolations; and as I have not the spirits of youth, I have recourse to age, and comfort myself that my time cannot be long whether I survive my country or the constitution, the former of which is alternately shaken or attempted to be propped by experiments on the latter; but it is idle to dream on old maxims. A great convulsion is at hand, and new eras find new levels. Old folks should not trouble themselves with great epochs at the end of their lives, but set themselves apart till they are swept to the ancient mass to which they belonged.

I have long taken my doctor's degree in Strulbruggism, and wonder I concern myself about the affairs of the living. Good night! I will go and converse with the dead.

1861. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, May 21, 1778.

I WILL not flatter you; I was not in the least amused with either Simon, Simeon, or William of Wyrcestre. If there was anything tolerable in either, it was the part

Hastings refused to give them up. Hastings. Clavering died shortly
The dispute was referred to arbitration, and decided in favour of afterwards.

omitted, or the part I did not read, which was the journey to Jerusalem, about which I have not the smallest curiosity. I thank you for mentioning the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which I sent for.

Mr. Essex has called upon me, and left a drawing of a bridge, with which I am perfectly pleased—but I was unluckily out of town, he left no direction, and I know not where to seek him in this overgrown bottle of hay. I still hope he will call again before his return.

May not I, should not I, wish you joy on the restoration of Popery? I expect soon to see Capucins tramping about the streets, and Jesuits in *high places*. We are relapsing fast to our pristine state, and have nothing but our island, and our old religion.

Mr. Nasmith's¹ publication directed me to his catalogue of the MSS. in Bennet Library, which I did not know was printed. I found two or three from which I should be glad to have transcripts, and would willingly pay for; but I left the book at Strawberry, and must trouble you another time with that commission.

The City wants to bury Lord Chatham in St. Paul's, which, as a person said to me this morning, would literally be *robbing Peter to pay Paul*. I wish it could be so, that there might be some decoration in that nudity, *en attendant* the re-establishment of various altars.

It is not my design to purchase the new edition of the *Biographia*; I trust they will give the old purchasers the additions as a supplement. I had corrected the errata of the press throughout my copy, but I could not take the trouble of transcribing them, nor could lend them the original; as I am apt to scribble notes in the margins of all my books that interest me at all.

Pray let me know if Baker's life is among the additions,

LETTER 1861.—¹ Rev. James Nasmith (1740–1808), antiquary.

and whether you are satisfied with it, as there could not be events enough in his retired life to justify two accounts of it.

There are no new *old news*, and you care for nothing within the memory of man. I am always intending to draw up an account of my intercourse with Chatterton, which I take very kindly your reminding me of ; but some avocation or other has still prevented it. My perfect innocence of having, even indirectly, been an ingredient in his dismal fate, which happened two years after our correspondence, and after he had exhausted both his resources and constitution, have made it more easy to prove that I never saw him, knew nothing of his ever being in London, and was the first person, instead of the last, on whom he had practised his impositions, and founded his chimeric hopes of promotion. My very first, or at least second letter, undeceived him in those views, and our correspondence was broken off before he quitted his master, business, and Bristol—so that his disappointment with me was but his first ill success ; and he resented my incredulity so much, that he never condescended to let me see him. Indeed, what I have said now to you, and which cannot be controverted by a shadow of a doubt, would be sufficient vindication. I could only add to the proofs, a vain regret of never having known his distresses, which his amazing genius would have tempted me to relieve, though I fear he had no other claim to compassion. Mr. Warton has said enough to open the eyes of every one, that is not greatly prejudiced, to his forgeries. Dr. Milles is one, who will not make a bow to Dr. Percy, for not being as wilfully blind as himself—but when he gets a beam in his eye that he takes for an antique truth, there is no persuading him to submit to be couched. Adieu ! dear Sir.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1862. TO WILLIAM BARRETT¹.

I AM far from determined to publish anything about Chatterton. It would almost look like making myself a party. I do not love controversy. If I print, my chief reason would be that both in the account of the poems, and in Mr. Warton's last volume, my name has been brought in with so little circumspection and accuracy, that it looks as if *my* rejection of Chatterton had driven him to despair; whereas I was the first person on whom he essayed his art and ambition, instead of being the last. I never saw him; there was an interval of near two years between his application to me, and his dismal end; nor had he quitted his master, nor was necessitous, nor otherwise poor than attornies' clerks are, nor had he come to London, nor launched into dissipation, when his correspondence with me stopped.

As faithfully as I can recollect the circumstances, without dates and without searching for what few memorandums I preserved relative to him, I will recapitulate his history with me.

Bathoe, my bookseller, brought me a packet left with him. It contained an ode, or little poem of two or three stanzas in *alternate rhyme*, on the death of Richard the 1st, and I was told in very few lines that it had been found at Bristol with many other old poems; and that the possessor could furnish me with accounts of a series of great painters that had flourished at Bristol.

Here I must pause, to mention my own reflections. At

LETTER 1862.—Not in C.; reprinted from Lord Orford's *Works* (1798), vol. iv. pp. 220–7.

¹ William Barrett (1733–1789), a Bristol surgeon, author of a *History of Bristol* published in 1789. Barrett

was thoroughly deceived by Chatterton's forgeries. He became acquainted with him, and Chatterton supplied many documents and drawings which were accepted by Barrett and embodied in his *History*.

first I concluded that somebody, having met with my *Anecdotes of Painting*, had a mind to laugh at me, I thought not very ingeniously, as I was not likely to swallow a succession of great painters at Bristol. The ode, or sonnet, as I think it was called, was too pretty to be part of the plan; and as is easy with all the other supposed poems of Rowley, it was not difficult to make it very modern by changing the old words for new; though yet more difficult than with most of them—you see, I tell you fairly the case. I then imagined, and do still, that the success of Ossian's poems had suggested the idea. Whether the transmitter hinted, or I supposed from the subject, that the discovered treasure was of the age of Richard the 1st, I cannot take upon me to assert—yet that impression was so strong on my mind, that two years after, when Dr. Goldsmith told me they were then allotted to the age of Henry IV or V, I said with surprise, 'They have shifted the date extremely.' This is no evidence—but there is one line in the printed poems of Rowley that makes me more firmly believe that the age of Richard the 1st was the era fixed upon by Chatterton for his forgeries, for that line says,

Now is Cœur de Lion gone—

or some such words, for I quote by memory, not having the book at hand. It is very improbable that Rowley, writing in the reign of Henry VI, or Edward IV, as is now pretended, or in that of Henry IV, as was assigned by the credulous before they had digested their system, should incidentally in a poem on another subject say, *now* is Richard dead. I am persuaded that Chatterton himself, before he had dived into Canning's history, had fixed on a much earlier period for the age of his forgeries.—Now I return to my narrative.

I wrote, according to the enclosed direction, for farther

particulars. Chatterton, in answer, informed me that he was the son of a poor widow, who supported him with great difficulty ; that he was clerk or apprentice to an attorney, but had a taste and turn for more elegant studies ; and hinted a wish that I would assist him with my interest in emerging out of so dull a profession, by procuring him some place, in which he could pursue his natural bent. He affirmed that great treasures of ancient poetry had been discovered in his native city, and were in the hands of a person, who had lent him those he had transmitted to me ; for he now sent me others, amongst which was an absolute modern pastoral in dialogue, thinly sprinkled with old words. Pray observe, Sir, that he affirmed having received the poems from another person ; whereas it is ascertained that the gentleman at Bristol who possesses the fund of Rowley's poems, received them from Chatterton.

I wrote to a relation of mine at Bath to inquire into the situation and character of Chatterton according to his own account of himself: nothing was returned about his character, but his own story was verified.

In the meantime I communicated the poems to Mr. Gray and Mr. Mason, who at once pronounced them forgeries, and declared there was no symptom in them of their being the productions of near so distant an age ; the language and metres being totally unlike anything ancient ; for though I no doubt to them ascribed them to the time of Richard I, Mr. Gray nor Mr. Mason saw anything in the poems that was not more recent than even the reign of Henry VIII. And here let me remark how incredible it is that Rowley, a monk of a mere commercial town, which was all Bristol then was, should have purified the language and introduced a diversified metre more classic than was known to that polished courtly poet, Lord Surry ; and this in the barbarous turbulent times of Henry VI, and that

the whole nation should have relapsed into the same barbarism of style and versification, till Lord Surry, I might almost say, till Waller arose. I leave to better scholars and better antiquaries to settle how Rowley became so well versed in the Greek tragedians. He was as well acquainted with Butler, or Butler with him, for a chaplain of the late Bishop of Exeter has found in Rowley a line of *Hudibras*.

Well, Sir, being satisfied with my intelligence about Chatterton, I wrote him a letter with as much kindness and tenderness as if I had been his guardian ; for though I had no doubt of his impositions, such a spirit of poetry breathed in his coinage, as interested me for him ; nor was it a grave crime in a young bard to have forged false notes of hand that were to pass current only in the parish of Parnassus. I undeceived him about my being a person of any interest, and urged to him, that in duty and gratitude to his mother, who had straitened herself to breed him up to a profession, he ought to labour in it, that in her old age he might absolve his filial debt ; and I told him, that when he should have made a fortune, he might unbend himself with the studies consonant to his inclinations. I told him also, that I had communicated his transcripts to much better judges, and that they were by no means satisfied with the authenticity of his supposed MSS. I mentioned their reasons, particularly that there were no such metres known in the age of Richard I—and that might be a reason with Chatterton himself to shift the era of his productions.

He wrote me rather a peevish answer, said he could not contest with a person of my learning (a compliment by no means due to me, and which I certainly had not assumed, having mentioned my having consulted abler judges), maintained the genuineness of the poems, and demanded to have

them returned, as they were the property of another gentleman. Remember this.

When I received this letter, I was going to Paris in a day or two, and either forgot his request of the poems, or, perhaps not having time to have them copied, deferred complying till my return, which was to be in six weeks. I protest I do not remember which was the case; and yet, though in a cause of so little importance, I will not utter a syllable of which I am not positively certain; nor will charge my memory with a tittle beyond what it retains.

Soon after my return from France, I received another letter from Chatterton, the style of which was singularly impertinent. He demanded his poems roughly; and added, that I should not have dared to use him so ill, if he had not acquainted me with the narrowness of his circumstances.

My heart did not accuse me of insolence to him. I wrote an answer, expostulating with him on his injustice, and renewing good advice—but upon second thoughts, reflecting that so wrong-headed a young man, of whom I knew nothing, and whom I had never seen, might be absurd enough to print my letter, I flung it into the fire; and wrapping up both his poems and letters, without taking a copy of either, for which I am now sorry, I returned all to him, and thought no more of him or them, till about a year and a half after, when dining at the Royal Academy, Dr. Goldsmith drew the attention of the company with an account of a marvellous treasure of ancient poems lately discovered at Bristol, and expressed enthusiastic belief in them; for which he was laughed at by Dr. Johnson, who was present. I soon found this was the *trouvaille* of my friend Chatterton; and I told Dr. Goldsmith that this novelty was none to me, who might, if I had pleased, have had the honour of ushering the great discovery to the learned world. You may imagine, Sir, we did not at all

agree in the measure of our faith : but though his credulity diverted me, my mirth was soon dashed ; for, on asking about Chatterton, he told me he had been in London, and had destroyed himself. I heartily wished then that I had been the dupe of all the poor young man had written to me ; for who would not have his understanding imposed on to save a fellow being from the utmost wretchedness, despair and suicide !—and a poor young man not eighteen—and of such miraculous talents—for, dear Sir, if I wanted credulity on one hand, it is ample on the other. Yet heap all the improbabilities you please on the head of Chatterton, the impossibility on Rowley's side will remain. An amazing genius for poetry, which one of them possessed, might flash out in the darkest age—but could Rowley anticipate the phraseology of the eighteenth century ? His poetic fire might burst through the obstacles of the times ; like Homer or other original bards, he might have formed a poetical style—but would it have been precisely that of an age subsequent to him by some hundred years ? Nobody can admire the poetry of the poems in question more than I do—but except being better than most modern verses, in what do they differ in the construction ? The words are old, the construction evidently of yesterday ; and by substituting modern words, ay, single words, to the old, or to those invented by Chatterton, in what do they differ ? Try that method with any composition, even in prose of the reign of Henry VI, and see if the consequence will be the same. But I am getting into the controversy, instead of concluding my narrative, which indeed is ended.

You seem to think Chatterton might have assistance—I don't know but he might ; but one of the wonderful parts of his prodigious story is, that he had formed disciples—yes, at eighteen. Some of his youthful companions have continued to walk in his paths, and have produced Saxon

and other poems of antique cast ; but not with the poetic spirit of their master ; nor can it be discovered that Chatterton received instruction or aid from any man of learning or abilities. Dr. P.² and Mr. L. have collected everything relating to him that can be traced, and all tends to concentrate the forgery of Rowley's poems in his single person. They have numerous pieces of Chatterton's writing in various ways—nay, so versatile, so extensive, so commanding was his genius, that he forged architecture and heraldry ; that is, could invent both in art and in folly. In short, I do not believe that there ever existed so master a genius, except that of Psalmanazar, who before twenty-two could create a language, that all the learned of Europe, though they suspected, could not detect.

Thus, Sir, with the most scrupulous veracity, I have told you my share in that unhappy young man's story. With more pains I could add a few dates, but the substance would be identically the same. Rowley would be a prophet, a foreseer, if the poems were his ; yet in any other light he would not be so extraordinary a phenomenon as Chatterton—whom, though he was a bad man, as is said, I lament not having seen. He might at that time have been less corrupted, and my poor patronage might have saved him from the abyss into which he plunged. But, alas ! how could I surmise that the well-being and existence of a human creature depended on my swallowing a legend, and from an unknown person ? Thank God ! so far from having anything to charge myself with on Chatterton's account, it is very hypothetical to suppose that I could have stood between him and ruin. It is one of those possible events, which we should be miserable indeed if imputable to a conscience that had not the smallest light to direct it ! If I went to Bengal, I might perhaps interpose

² Dr. Percy.

and save the life of some poor Indian devoted by the fury of a British nabob : but amiable as such Quixotism would be, we are not to sacrifice every duty to the possibility of realizing one conscientious vision. I believe I have tired you ; I am sure I have wearied my own hand, which has written these seven pages without pausing ; but when anything takes possession of my mind, I forget my gouty fingers and my age—or perhaps betray the latter by my garrulity. However, it will save me more trouble—I shall certainly never write a word more about Chatterton. You are my confessor ; I have unburdened my soul to you, and I trust you will not enjoin me a public penance.

Yours most sincerely,

Strawberry Hill, May 23, 1778.

HORACE WALPOLE.

POSTSCRIPT.

I recollect another passage that I must add. A gentleman of rank, being struck with the beauty of the poems, and believing their antique originality, purchased a copy of them, and showed it to me. I expressed my doubts—‘ Now then,’ said the person, ‘ I will convince you : here is a painter’s bill that you cannot question. What think you, now ? ’ ‘ This,’ I replied, ‘ I do believe genuine ; and I will tell you why ’—and taking down the first volume of my *Anecdotes of Painting*, I showed him the identic bill printed some years before. ‘ This,’ said I, ‘ I know is ancient : Vertue transcribed it twenty years ago from some old parchments in the church of St. Mary Ratcliffe at Bristol.’ That was the origin of Chatterton’s list of great painters—and probably of his other inventions. Can it be supposed that Vertue should have seen that old bill, and with his inquisitive and diligent turn, especially about painters, not have inquired whether there was nothing more ? Vertue was even a versifier, as I have many proofs in his MSS., and searched much after Chaucer and Lidgate,

of whom he engraved portraits—yet all Rowley's remains, it seems, were reserved for Chatterton, who it cannot be denied did forge poetry and prose for others; and who, as indubitably, was born a great poet—yet not a line of tolerable poetry in Rowley's own hand can be produced. Did Chatterton destroy the originals to authenticate their existence? He certainly wrote his forgeries on the backs of old parchments, and there is both internal and external evidence against the antiquity of the poetry—but I will not take part in that dispute. Error, like the sea, is always gaining as much territory in one place as it loses in another, and it is to little purpose to make it change possessions.

1863. TO EARL HARCOURT.

MY DEAR LORD,

May 26, 1778.

As the weather is as fine as it is likely to be till the summer is gone, and as you have flattered me with the honour of a visit, may I ask if Sunday or Monday next will be agreeable to your Lordship and Lady Harcourt, or what other day before you go out of town to pull [*sic*] your own house?

Your Lordship's most devoted,

H. WALPOLE.

P.S. If you did not give yourself inland airs, you would wait to rebuild your house, till the French had burnt it down. I trust to the talisman of King William's spurs.

1864. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, May 31, 1778.

I AM glad you have deigned to answer me at last, for there is no conversation when only one talks. I was almost sorry that I had not begged you to order your

executor to send me word you was dead, and that I need not write any more. But, my good friend, you are full as great a contradiction as Lord John¹, or any Catholic Whig upon earth. You write once in a quarter, and yet complain of my small paper. I fixed upon this little quarto for substantial reasons. I am too apt to write too much to those I love, and prescribed myself this size that I might not weary them, and it holds all one has to say to those one loves not, and yet seems to contain a decent quantity.

I should like to accept the assignation² you give me, and will if I have the least encouragement, but I have had no invitation; and though I do not at all know why, am a little suspicious of not being in the most perfect favour. As this is by no means positive, I take no notice, because it is not at all on my side, and that it shall revive whenever it pleases, as my regard is just the same. If we should not meet I think you cannot refuse coming to me for a few days. Consider, I have turned that corner beyond which every hour is *lucrum*, and that I and everybody else think I have lived long enough; though I am not so old as Sam Martin³ counts me. The talisman is removed that prohibited your access to this part of the world, though surely Twickenham is a kind of country to so near a relation of Pope as you are by the side of your Virgin-Mothers. Let me have the satisfaction of seeing you here, whither very few are pressed to come. We have a thousand things to talk over, and are almost reduced to be the only two of the same opinion; for what those you call your friends mean, indeed I do not guess—it is most charitable to think they have no meaning. I used to fancy that calamity would

LETTER 1864.—¹ On May 13, 1778, Lord John Cavendish moved to address the King to settle a permanent fortune on the earldom of Chatham. Mason, in a letter, expressed surprise at this action on the part of one

who, with his family, had always disliked Lord Chatham.

² At Nuneham.

³ Martin had the reversion of Horace Walpole's place as Usher of the Exchequer.

bring us to our senses—it must bring our senses too. The two alternatives now are desolation, or a shameful peace: bankruptcy with either, only a little nearer, or a little farther off. It is actually come out on the agitation of the changes in the law, that at 60*l.* per commission, the Chancellor reaped seven thousand pounds last year by bankruptcies! Those changes were to have taken place last Thursday, but I do not hear they did. Thurlow is to be Lord Chancellor or Lord Keeper, I do not know which⁴. Wedderburn sits down with the Attorney's place, a disappointment and I suppose a full promise. Norton threatened to impeach him if peered, for telling the Chief Justice⁵ that Lord North would pay him out of the Treasury seven thousand pounds for the prothonotary's reversion. Thus justice makes a rope of one rogue, instead of using two ropes.

I shall certainly not go to the funeral. I go to no puppet-shows, nor want to see Lord Chatham's water-gall Lord Temple hobble chief mourner. I scarce inquire after the House of Commons, which is a scene of folly and Billingsgate. Burgoyne has tried to be the pathetic hero, and was forgotten for three hours, while Temple Luttrell and Lord G. Germaine scolded like two oyster-women: the first tried to be sent to Newgate, and the latter grasped his sword, and then asked pardon for having been grossly affronted. Lord Barrington implored Madam his Country's tears for declaring he was retiring from her service to virtuous privacy⁶. It is a pity she did not order him to be buried at the public expense. Lord Sandwich has run the gauntlet in the Lords for all the lies he has told all the winter about the fleet, and does not retire; but I am sick of repeating what you must be sick of reading. An invasion will have

⁴ Thurlow became Lord Chancellor.

⁵ Sir William de Grey.

⁶ Lord Barrington retired from the post of Secretary at War in the following December.

some dignity; but to see a great country gambol at the eve of ruin like a puppy on a precipice! Oh, one cannot buffoon like Lucian when one wants to speak daggers like Tacitus, and couch them in a sentence without descending to details.

I had rather talk on less interesting subjects, and will tell you a good *bon mot*. *Marie à la Coque*⁷ has had an outrageous quarrel with Miss Pelham on politics, or rather at Miss Pelham, who did not reply. This occasioned Lady Mary's notes being mentioned, which she signs as Duchess of York, 'Maryc' (the *c* passing for a flourish), if you do not go to law with her. On this, Burke said to Miss P., 'Upon my word you will be a match for her if you sign "Frances P."'

There was more humour in a reply of Lady Harrington's t'other day. Mrs. St. John had asked Lady Anna Maria⁸ to a ball without her mother, who would not let her go. The next time they met Lady Harrington made excuses, but said she never allowed her daughter to go to balls without her. Mrs. St. John replied, as her Ladyship suffered her to go to the Opera without her, she had hoped she would not have been more strict about a private dancing. Instead of knocking her down, as might have been expected, Lady Harrington looked her all over, and then, with a face melted to compassion, said in a soft voice, and very slowly, 'Mrs. St. John, if you *could* have a child, I am sure you would think as I do!' Imagine this addressed to a porpoise covered with flowers and feathers!

⁷ Lady Mary Coke. Marie Alacoque, a native of Burgundy, born in 1645; entered the convent of the Visitation de Ste Marie de Paray-le-Monial in 1671; died in 1690. She was an enthusiast and a visionary. This, together with the similarity of sound, led Horace Walpole to speak of Lady Mary Coke under

that name, she being also given to visions and enthusiasms, though not, however, of a religious sort.

⁸ Lady Anna Maria Stanhope, fifth daughter of second Earl of Harrington; m. (1782) Thomas Pelham-Clinton, Earl of Lincoln, afterwards third Duke of Newcastle; d. 1834.

But I would in vain divert you, I do not feel cheerful, though, as I told you in a former letter, I had rather see my country humbled than insolently enslaved. Nay, I think with comfort on a time which I shall not see, when the absurdity of the present age will be painted in its true colours. The mind never rests on the unhappy point: it prefers a non-existent scene to disagreeable sensations. I feel my own folly. Were I to leave England as happy or as glorious as I have known it, would it always remain so? Is not it enough that the mischief is falling on the heads of its authors? What period equalled the disgraces of the last six or eight months? Shall the innocent mix sighs with the guilty? Who will doubt where the blame is due? All the Robertsons and Humes of the Highlands cannot whitewash the four last years; nor, which is more delightful, can they plunder and disgrace America, as their chiefs have undone England. Seven James's were not worse politicians than the whole nation is; nor is there a more indelible mark of reprobation on the Jews. I would fain persuade myself that the seeds of tyranny will not thrive in this country, though all the inhabitants sow them. Every attempt chokes the seedsman: I hope we shall be a proverb, as Ireland is, for not producing venomous animals!

Remember that if I write on small paper I write a very small hand, and that this very letter would make forty, if I scrawled a large character like dukes and old earls, who allow as much room to every word as to their coach-and-six. I don't want news, but you can say nothing that I shall not be glad to read.

1865. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 31, 1778.

I AM forced to look at the dates I keep of my letters, to see what events I have or have not told you; for at this crisis something happens every day; though nothing very striking since the death of Lord Chatham, with which I closed my last. No?—yes, but there has. All England, that had abandoned him, found out, the moment his eyes were closed, that nothing but Lord Chatham could have preserved them. How lucky for him that the experiment cannot be made! Grief is fond, and grief is generous. The Parliament will bury him; the City begs the honour of being his grave; and the important question is not yet decided, whether he is to lie at Westminster or in St. Paul's; on which it was well said, that it would be 'robbing Peter to pay Paul.' An annuity of four thousand pounds is settled on the title of Chatham, and twenty thousand pounds allotted to pay his debts. The opposition and the administration disputed zeal; and neither care a straw about him. He is already as much forgotten as John of Gaunt.

General Burgoyne¹ has succeeded and been the topic, and for two days engrossed the attention of the House of Commons; and probably will be heard of no more. He was even forgotten for three hours while he was on the *tapis*, by a violent quarrel between Temple Luttrell (a brother of the Duchess of Cumberland) and Lord George Germaine; but the public has taken affection for neither them nor the General: being much more disposed at present to hate than to love—except the dead. It will be

LETTER 1865.—¹ General Burgoyne when he gave an account of his appeared in the House on May 26, conduct.

well if the ill-humour, which increases, does not break out into overt acts.

I know not what to say of war. The Toulon squadron was certainly blown back. That of Brest is supposed to be destined to invade some part of this country or Ireland; or rather, it is probable, will attempt our fleet. In my own opinion, there is no great alacrity in France—I mean, in the court of France—for war; and, as we have had time for great preparations, their eagerness will not increase. We shall suffer as much as they can desire by the loss of America, without their risk, and in few years shall be able to give them no umbrage; especially as our frenzy is still so strong, that, if France left us at quiet, I am persuaded we should totally exhaust ourselves in pursuing the vision of reconquest. Spain continues to disclaim hostility, as you told me. If the report is true of revolts in Mexico, they would be as good as a bond under his Catholic Majesty's hand.

We shall at least not doze, as we are used to do, in summer. The Parliament is to have only short adjournments; and our senators, instead of retiring to horse-races (*their* plough), are all turned soldiers, and disciplining militia. Camps everywhere, and the ladies in the uniform of their husbands! In short, if the dose is not too strong, a little adversity would not be quite unseasonable.—A little! you will cry; why what do you call the loss of America? Oh, my dear Sir, do you think a capital as enormous as London has its nerves affected by what happens beyond the Atlantic? What has become of all your reading? There is nothing so unnatural as the feelings of a million of persons that live together in one city. They have not one conception like those in villages and in the country. They presume or despond from quite different motives. They have both more sense and less, than those

who are not in contact with a multitude. Wisdom forms empires, but folly dissolves them ; and a great capital, that dictates to the rest of the community, is always the last to perceive the decays of the whole, because it takes its own greatness for health².

Lord Holderness³ is dead ; not quite so considerable a personage as he once expected to be, though nature never intended him for anything that he was. The Chancellor⁴, another child of Fortune, quits the Seals ; and they are, or are to be, given to the Attorney-General, Thurlow, whom nobody will reproach with want of abilities.

As the Parliament will rise on Tuesday, you will not expect my letters so frequently as of late, especially if hostilities do not commence. In fact, our newspapers tell you everything faster than I can : yet I write, because you have more faith in my intelligence ; yet all its merit consists in my not telling you fables. I hear no more than everybody does, but I send you only what is sterling ; or, at least, give you reports for no more than they are worth. I believe Sir John Dick is much more punctual, and hears more ; but, till you displace me, I shall execute my office of being your gazetteer.

1866. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 3, 1778.

I WILL not dispute with you, dear Sir, on patriots and politics. One point is past controversy, that the ministers have ruined this country ; and if the Church of England is satisfied with being reconciled to the Church of Rome, and

² When Constantinople was taken by Mahomet II, the whole empire of the East had long been reduced to the capital itself. *Walpole*.

³ Robert Darcy, last Earl of Hol-

derness, had been Ambassador, Secretary of State, and Governor to George, Prince of Wales. *Walpole*.

⁴ Earl Bathurst.

thinks it a compensation for the loss of America and all credit in Europe, she is as silly an old woman as any granny in an almshouse. France is very glad we are grown such fools, and soon saw that the Presbyterian Dr. Franklin had more sense than all our ministers together. She has got over all her prejudices, has expelled the Jesuits, and made the Protestant Swiss, Necker, her Comptroller-General. It is a little woful, that we are relapsing into the nonsense that the rest of Europe is shaking off! and it is the more deplorable, as we know by repeated experience, that this country has always been disgraced by Tory administrations. The rubric is the only gainer by them in a few martyrs.

I do not know yet what is settled about the spot of Lord Chatham's interment. I am no more an enthusiast to his memory than you. I knew his faults and his defects—yet one great fact cannot only not be controverted, but I doubt more remarkable every day—I mean, that under him we attained not only our highest elevation, but the most solid authority in Europe. When the names of Marlborough and Chatham are still pronounced with awe in France, our little cavils make a puny sound. Nations that are beaten cannot be mistaken.

I have been looking out for your friend a set of my heads of Painters, and find I want six or seven. I think I have some odd ones in town. If I have not, I will have deficiencies supplied from the plates; though I fear they will not be good, as so many have been taken off. I should be very ungrateful for all your kindnesses, if I neglected any opportunity of obliging you, dear Sir. Indeed, our old and unalterable friendship is creditable to us both, and very uncommon between two men who differ so very much in their opinions relative to Church and State. I believe the reason is, that we are both sincere, and never meant to

make advantage by our principles, which I allow is too common on both sides, and I own, too, fairly, more common on my side of the question than on yours. There is a reason, too, for that: the honours and emoluments are in the gift of the crown: the nation has no separate treasury to reward its friends.

If Mr. Tyrwhit has opened his eyes to Chatterton's forgeries, there is an instance of conviction against strong prejudice! I have drawn up an account¹ of my transaction with that marvellous young man. You shall see it one day or other, but I do not intend to print it. I have taken a thorough dislike to being an author; and if it would not look like begging you to compliment me, by contradicting me, I would tell you, what I am most seriously convinced of, that I find what small share of parts I had, grown dulled—and when I perceive it myself, I may well believe that others would not be less sharp-sighted. It is very natural; mine were spirits rather than parts; and as time has rebated the one, it must surely destroy their resemblance to the other.—Pray don't say a syllable in reply on this head, or I shall have done exactly what I said I would not do. Besides, as you have always been too partial to me, I am on my guard—and when I will not expose myself to my enemies, I must not listen to the prejudice of my friends; and as nobody is more partial to me than you, there is nobody I must trust less in that respect.

Yours most sincerely,

H. W.

LETTER 1866.—¹ *A Letter to the Editor of the Miscellanies of Thomas Chatterton*, dated May 23, 1778.

(See *Works of Lord Orford*, vol. iv. p. 207.)

1867. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 10, 1778.

I AM as impatient and in as much hurry as you was, dear Sir, to clear myself from the slightest intention of censuring your politics. I know the sincerity and disinterested goodness of your heart, and when I must be convinced how little certain we all are of what is truth, it would be very presumptuous to condemn the opinions of any good man, and still less an old and unalterable friend, as I have ever found you. The destruction that violent and arbitrary principles have drawn on this blinded country has moved my indignation. We never were a great and happy country till the Revolution. The system of these days tended to overturn, and has overturned, that establishment, and brought on the disgraces that ever attended the foolish and wicked councils of the house of Stuart. If man is a rational being, he has a right to make use of his reason, and to enjoy his liberty. We, we alone almost, had a constitution that every other nation upon earth envied or ought to envy. This is all I contend for. I will give you up whatever descriptions of men you please, that is, the leaders of parties, not the principles. These cannot change, those generally do, when power falls into the hands of them or their party; because men are corruptible, which truth is not. But the more the leaders of a party dedicated to liberty are apt to change, the more I adore the principle, because it shows that extent of power is not to be trusted even with those that are the most sensible of the blessing of liberty. Man is a domineering animal; and it has been not only my principle, but practice, too, to quit everybody at the gate of the palace. I trust we shall not much differ on these outlines, but we will bid adieu to the subject: it is

never an agreeable one to those who do not mean to make a trade of it.

I heartily wish you may not find the pontiff what I think the order, and what I know him, if you mean the high-priest of Ely¹. He is all I have been describing, and worse : and I have too good an opinion of you, to believe that he will ever serve you.

What I said of disclaiming authorship by no means alluded to Mr. Baker's life. It would be enough that you desire it, for me to undertake it. Indeed, I am inclined to it because he was what you and I are, a party-man from principle, not from interest : and he, who was so candid, surely is entitled to the strictest candour. You shall send me your papers whenever you please. If I can succeed to your satisfaction, I shall be content ; though I do assure you there was no affectation in my saying that I find my small talent decline. I shall write the life to oblige you, without any thoughts of publication, unless I am better pleased than I expect to be ; and even then not in my own life. I had rather show that I am sensible of my own defects, and that I have acquired judgement enough not to hope praise for my writings ; for surely when they are not obnoxious, and one only leaves them behind one, it is a mark that one is not very vain of them.

I have found the whole set of my *Painters*, and will send them the first time I go to town ; and I will have my paper on Chatterton transcribed for you, though I am much chagrined at your giving me no hope of seeing you again here. I will not say more of it : for, while it is in my power, I will certainly make you a visit now and then, if there is no other way of our meeting. Mr. Tyrwhit, I hear, has actually published an appendix, in which he gives up Rowley. I have not seen it, but will. Shall

I beg you to transcribe the passage in which Dr. Kippis abuses my father and me? for I shall not buy the new edition², only to purchase abuse on me and mine. I may be angry at liberties he takes with Sir Robert, but not with myself: I shall rather take it as flattery to be ranked with him; though there can be nothing worse said of my father than to place us together. Oh, that great, that good man! Dr. Kippis may as well throw a stone at the sun!

I am sorry you have lost poor Mr. Bentham³. Will you say a civil thing for me to his widow, if she is living, and you think it not improper? I have not forgotten their great kindness to me. Pray send me your paper on Mr. Prior's generosity⁴ to Mr. Baker. I am sorry it was not so. Prior is much a favourite with me, *though a Tory*, nor did I ever hear anything ill of him. He left his party, but not his friends, and seems to me to have been very amiable. Do you know I pretend to be very impartial sometimes? Mr. Hollis⁵ wrote against me for not being Whig enough. I am offended at Mrs. Macaulay for being too much a Whig.—In short, we are all silly animals, and scarce ever more so than when we affect sense.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1868. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 16, 1778.

As I have just received yours of May 30th, I will begin to answer it, though I wrote to you on the first of this

² Of the *Biographia Britannica*.

³ Joseph Bentham, Printer to the University of Cambridge.

⁴ The author of the life of Baker in the *Biographia Britannica* stated that Prior handed over to Baker the

income derived from the fellowship held by him at St. John's College, Cambridge. This statement was subsequently contradicted.

⁵ Thomas Hollis (1720–1774), noted for his Whiggism.

month, and think I shall not have enough additional to fill a whole letter yet.

The public imagined there would have been some changes on the rising of the Parliament; but they began and ended in the law, and with bestowing the three vacant Garters¹. The Toulon squadron is certainly gone to America; if to Boston, it is possible with the immediate view only of getting sailors and two ships that are building there for France. If they can resist the temptation of burning Halifax, attacking Lord Howe, or the West Indies, they are as great philosophers as Sir William Howe, who has twice gazed at General Washington. The last account from that quarter had a little spirit in it; they have burnt above forty American sloops and fry in the Delaware. For these last days there have been rumours of disposition in the Americans to treat; but they do not gain much credit. Admiral Byron is sailed to America, and Admiral Keppel is at sea. At home we are spread with camps. This is all that amounts to facts, or to the eggs of facts. Sir William Howe is expected in a week or ten days. As the Parliament is not sitting, that topic may be suspended. Next we are to await the news of the reception of the Commissioners; perhaps, their return. It would be easy to dilate reflections on all this suspense; but I do not write to display my sagacity, but to inform you.

I should be sorry your nephew protracted his return, but as you will have the comfort of seeing him again. It will be one in the present situation of your country.

The meteor of the reading world is dead, Voltaire. That throne is quite vacant. We shall see whether his old friend of Prussia² maintains that of war, or cedes it to a young Cæsar³. He seems to me to be aiming at a more artful

LETTER 1868.—¹ On the Earls of Rochford and Suffolk, and on Viscount Weymouth.

² Frederick II. *Walpole*.

³ The Emperor Joseph II. *Walpole*.

crown—that of policy ; and, in all probability, will attain it ; at least, I am not much prejudiced yet in favour of his competitor. It is from beyond the Atlantic that the world, perhaps, will see genius revive. They seem to set out with a politeness with which few empires have commenced. We have not shown ourselves quite so civilized. We hector and called names, talked fire and sword, but have made more use of the first than of the second. Our generals beg to be tried, and our ministers not to be tried. This does not sound well when translated into other languages. For my part, who hold that Chance has much more to do in the affairs of the world than Wisdom, I wait to see what the first will ordain. This belief is a sovereign preservative against despondency. There have been very gloomy moments in my life ; but experience has shown me, either that events do not correspond to appearances, or that I have very little shrewdness ; and therefore I can resign the honour of my penetration with satisfaction, when my foresight augurs ill. If Lord Chatham knew that he should conquer the world, or Dr. Franklin that he should reduce us lower than Lord Chatham found us, I should respect their penetration indeed ! But, without detracting from their spirit or abilities, I do not believe the first expected half the success he met with, or the latter half the incapacity that has been exerted against, and, consequently, for him.

London, Friday, 19th.

I came to town to-day for a moment, but do not hear a word to add. Great events, should there be any, you may trust I shall send you the first moment I hear them. I shall not write, only to say I know nothing ; and so little happens in summer, but military adventures, that one's letters are mere descriptions of want of matter.

1869. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Strawberry Hill,¹ June 25, 1778.

I AM quite astonished, Madam, at not hearing of Mr. Conway's being returned! What is he doing? Is he revolting and setting up for himself, like our nabobs in India? or is he forming Jersey¹, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark, into the united provinces in the compass of a silver penny? I should not wonder if this was to be the fate of our distracted empire, which we seem to have made so large, only that it might afford to split into separate kingdoms. I told Mr. C. I should not write any more, concluding he would not stay a twinkling; and your Ladyship's last encouraged my expecting him. In truth, I had nothing to tell him if he had written.

I have been in town but one single night this age, as I could not bear to throw away this phoenix June. It has rained a good deal this morning, but only made it more delightful. The flowers are all Arabian. I have found but one inconvenience, which is the hosts of cuckoos: one would not think one was in Doctors' Commons. It is very disagreeable, that the nightingales should sing but half a dozen songs, and the other beasts squall for two months together.

Poor Mrs. Clive has been robbed again in her own lane, as she was last year, and has got the jaundice, she thinks, with the fright. I don't make a visit without a blunderbuss; so one might as well be invaded by the French. Though I live in the centre of ministers, I do not know a syllable of politics; and though within hearing of Lady Greenwich, who is but two miles off, I have not a word of news to send your Ladyship. I live like Berecynthia,

LETTER 1869.—¹ General Conway was Governor of Jersey.

surrounded by nephews and nieces ; yet Park Place is full as much in my mind, and I beg for its history.

Your most faithful,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1870. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, June 26, 1778.

MR. NICHOLLS has been here, and tells me he has seen you, and that you have not been well, for which I am very sorry indeed. He says York disagreed with you, and that you will go thither no more in winter. The rest of his account was much more welcome : that you have made charming progress in your third book¹, and inserted divine lines on Gray. Them I do thirst to see, and trust I shall ere many moons have put on their nightcaps ; for Lord Harcourt has asked me to meet you at Nuneham. When it is to be I don't know, for they are going or gone into Sussex ; but if you can cast a figure and guess, I beg you to give me a hint, though nothing shall prevent my being faithful to that assignation, but my lord and master, gout, whose commands, however, I do not expect.

Well, the signal is fired. Admiral Keppel has had a smart skirmish with three frigates² of the Brest squadron, and has sent one of them in. They fired first, and yet seem to have provoked him that they may plead we began the war. I trouble myself mighty little about what their majesties, the Kings of Europe, will say on these punctilios over their coffee. We, the Achivi, are to be the sufferers, and particularly we the Achivi of these islands. In truth Agamemnon himself will be no great gainer, nor be gathered

LETTER 1870.—¹ The third book of Mason's poem *The English Garden*.

² The *Pallas*, the *Licorne*, and the

Belle Poule. The latter escaped. The skirmish took place on June 18, 1778.

to the Atridæ with quite so many crowns on his head as they bequeathed to him, and he will wish he had not worn that of Caledonia!

I know nothing else; but what a volume in that *else*! you bards that can prophesy with the lyre in your hand have

ample scope and verge enough³

for pouring out odes full of calamity and of *funera Dardaniae gentis*. Distress is already felt; one hears of nothing but of the want of money; one sees it every hour. I sit in my blue window and miss nine in ten of the carriages that used to pass before it. Houses sell for nothing, which, two years ago, nabobs would have given lacks of diamonds for. Sir Gerard Vannecks's⁴ house and beautiful terrace on the Thames, with forty acres of ground, and valued by his father at twenty thousand pounds, was bought in last week at six thousand. Richmond is deserted; an hundred and twenty coaches used to be counted at the church door—there are now twenty. I know nobody that grows rich but Margaret. This halcyon season has brought her more customers than ever, and were anything to happen to her, I have thoughts, like greater folk, of being my own minister, and showing my house myself. I don't wonder *your Garden* has grown in such a summer, and I am glad it has, that our taste in gardening may be immortal in verse, for I doubt it has seen its best days! Your poem may transplant it to America, whither our best works will be carried now, as our worst used to be. Do not you feel satisfied in knowing you shall be a classic in a free and rising empire? Swell all your ideas, give a loose to all your poetry; your lines will be repeated on the banks of the Oroonoko; and, which

³ 'Give ample room, and verge enough

The characters of hell to trace.'—*The Bard*, ii. 1.

⁴ Second Baronet; d. 1791.

is another comfort, Ossian's dirges will never be known there. Poor Strawberry must sink *in faece Romuli*; that melancholy thought silences me. Good night!

1871. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

July 4, 1778.

CHILDREN break their playthings to see the inside of them. Pope thought superior beings looked on Newton but as a monkey of uncommon parts: would not he think that we have been like babies smashing an empire to see what it was made of? Truly I doubt whether there will be a whole piece left in three months: the conduct bears due proportion to the incapacity—you ought to be on the spot to believe it. When Keppel's messenger, Mr. Berkeley¹, arrived, neither the First Lord of the Admiralty² nor the Secretary³ was to be found! and now Mr. Keppel is returned, we learn that the East and West India fleets, worth four millions, are at stake, and the French frigates are abroad in pursuit of them. Yesterday the merchants were with Lord North to press Keppel might sail again against a superior fleet! Forty thousand men are on the coast, and transports assembling in every port, and nothing but incapacity and inability in all this, and not a grain of treachery.

General Howe is arrived and was graciously received. The agreeable news he brought is, that Clinton for want of provisions has abandoned Philadelphia and marched through the Jerseys to New York without molestation, on condition of not destroying Philadelphia. The Congress has ratified the treaty with France, and intend to treat the Commissioners

LETTER 1871. — ¹ Hon. George Cranfield Berkeley (1753 - 1818), second son of fourth Earl of Berkeley; afterwards G.C.B. and Admiral of the White.

² The Earl of Sandwich.

³ Philip Stephens, M.P. for Sandwich; created a Baronet in 1795; d. 1809.

de haut en bas, unless you choose to believe the *Morning Post*, who says five provinces declare for peace. I told you lately my curiosity to know what is to be left to us at a general peace. The wisest thing the ministers could do would be to ask that question incontinently. I am persuaded in the present apathy that the nation would be perfectly pleased, let the terms be what they would. A series of disasters may spoil this good humour, and there often wants but a man to fling a stone to spread a conflagration. The Treasury is not rich enough at present to indemnify the losers of four millions: the stockholders are two hundred and forty thousand, and the fraction forty thousand would make an ugly mob. In short, tempests that used to be composed of irascible elements never had more provocation than they are likely to have; such is the glimpse of our present horizon. Now to your letter.

If your Mecænas's⁴ fame is overwhelmed in Lord Chatham's and Voltaire's, it is already revenged on the latter's. Madame du Deffand's letter of to-day says he is already forgotten. *La Belle Poule*⁵ has obliterated him, but probably will have a contrary effect on Lord Chatham. All my old friend has told me of Voltaire's death is, that the excessive fatigues he underwent by his journey to Paris, and by the bustle he made with reading his play to the actors and hearing them repeat it, and by going to it, and by the crowds that flocked to him; in one word, the agitation of so much applause at eighty-four threw him into a strangury, for which he took so much laudanum that his frame could not resist all, and he fell a martyr to his vanity. Nay, Garrick, who is above twenty years younger, and as full as vain, would have been choked with such doses of flattery; though he would like to die the death.

⁴ The late Earl of Holderness.

the *Arethusa* on June 18, after a severe fight.

⁵ The frigate which escaped from

You, who are not apt to gape for incense, may be believed when you speak well of *Sappho*. I am sorry I must wait for the sight till Lord Harcourt proclaims summer. I enjoy the present, which I remember none like; but even this is clouded by the vexation of seeing this lovely island spoiled and sold to shame! I look at our beautiful improvements, and sigh to think that they have seen their best days. Did you feel none of these melancholy reflections at Wentworth Castle? I wrote the Earl⁶ a letter two days ago that will not please him, but can one always contain one's chagrin when one's country is ruined by infatuation? No, we never can revive! We killed the hen that laid the golden eggs! The term *Great Britain* will be a jest. My English pride is wounded, yet there is one comfortable thought remains: when Liberty was abandoned by her sons here, she animated her genuine children, and inspired them to chastise the traitor Scots that attacked her. *They* have made a blessed harvest of their machinations. If there is a drachm of sense under a crown, a Scot hereafter will be reckoned pestilential. Methinks the word prerogative should never sound very delightful in this island; attempt to extend it and its fairest branches wither and drop off. What has an army of fifty thousand men fighting for sovereignty achieved in America? retreated from Boston, retreated from Philadelphia, laid down their arms at Saratoga, and lost thirteen provinces! Nor is the measure yet full! Such are the consequences of our adopting new legislators, new historians, new doctors! Locke and Sidney, for Humes, Johnsons, and Dalrymples! When the account is made up and a future Historiographer Royal casts up debtor and creditor, I hope he will please to state the balance between the last war *for America* and the present *against it*. The advantages of that we know,—Quebec, the

⁶ The Earl of Strafford.

Havannah, Martinico, Guadaloupe, the East Indies, the French and Spanish fleet destroyed, &c., &c. ; all the bills *per contra* are not yet come in ! Our writers have been disputing for these hundred and sixty-six years on Whig and Tory principles. Their successors, who I suppose will continue the controversy, will please to allow at least that if the ministers of both parties were equally complaisant when in power, the splendour of the crown (I say nothing of the happiness of the people, which is never taken into the account) has constantly been augmented by Whig administrations, and has faded (and then and now a little more) when Tories have governed ! The reason is as plain : Whig principles are founded on sense ; a Whig may be a fool, a Tory must be so : the consequence is plain ; a Whig when a minister may abandon his principles, but he will retain his sense and will therefore not risk the felicity of his posterity by sacrificing everything to selfish views. A Tory attaining power hurries to establish despotism : the honour, the trade, the wealth, the peace of the nation, all are little to him in comparison of the despotic will of his master, but are not you glad I write on small paper ?

1872. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1778.

You tell me in yours of the 23rd of last month, which I received to-day, that my letters are necessary to your tranquillity. That is sufficient to make me write, though I have nothing very positive to tell you. I did not mention Admiral Keppel's skirmish with and capture of two frigates of the Brest squadron ; not because I thought it trifling, but concluding it would produce immediate declaration of war ; and, for the fact itself, I knew both our papers and the French would anticipate me. Indeed, Sir John Dick

has talked to me so much of his frequency and punctuality with you, that I might have concluded he would not neglect so public an event; not that I trust to anybody else for sending you intelligence.

No declaration has followed on either side. I, who know nothing but what everybody knows, am disposed to hope that both nations are grown rational; that is, humane enough to dislike carnage. Both Kings are pacific by nature, and the voice of Europe now prefers legislators to *heroes*, which is but a name for destroyers of their species.

It is true, we are threatened with invasion. You ask me why I seem to apprehend less than formerly? For many reasons. In the first place, I am above thirty years older. Can one fear anything in the dregs of life as at the beginning? Experience, too, has taught me that nothing happens in proportion to our conceptions. I have learnt, too, exceedingly to undervalue human policy. Chance and folly counteract most of its wisdom. From the *Mémoires de Noailles* I have learnt that, between the years 1740 and 1750, when I,—ay, and my Lord Chesterfield too,—had such gloomy thoughts, France was trembling with dread of us. These are general reasons. My particular ones are, that, if France meditated a considerable blow, she has neglected her opportunity. Last year, we had neither army nor a manned fleet at home. Now, we have a larger and better army than ever we had in the island, and a strong fleet. Within these three days, our West India and Mediterranean fleets, for which we have been in great pain, are arrived, and bring not only above two millions, but such a host of sailors as will supply the deficiencies in our unequipped men-of-war. The country is covered with camps; General Conway, who has been to one of them, speaks with astonishment of the fineness of the men, of the

regiments, of their discipline and manœuvring. In short, the French court has taught all our young nobility to be soldiers. The Duke of Grafton, who was the most indolent of ministers, is the most indefatigable of officers. For my part, I am almost afraid that there will be a larger military spirit amongst our men of quality than is wholesome for our constitution: France will have done us hurt enough, if she has turned us into generals instead of senators.

I can conceive another reason why France should not choose to venture an invasion. It is certain that at least five American provinces wish for peace with us. Nor can I think that thirteen English provinces would be pleased at seeing England invaded. Any considerable blow received by us would turn their new allies into haughty protectors. Should we accept a bad peace, America would find her treaty with them a very bad one: in short, I have treated you with speculations instead of facts. I know but one of the latter sort. The King's army has evacuated Philadelphia, from having eaten up the country, and has returned to New York. Thus it is more compact, and has less to defend.

General Howe is returned, richer in money than laurels. I do not know, indeed, that his wealth is great.

Fanaticism in a nation is no novelty: but you must know that, though the effects were so solid, the late appearance of enthusiasm about Lord Chatham was nothing but a general affectation of enthusiasm. It was a contention of hypocrisy between the opposition and the court, which did not last even to his burial. Not three of the court attended it, and not a dozen of the minority of any note. He himself said, between his fall in the House of Lords and his death, that, when he came to himself, not one of his old acquaintance of the court but Lord Despencer so much as asked him how he did. Do you imagine people are struck with the death of a man, who were not struck at the sudden appearance of his

death? We do not counterfeit so easily on a surprise, as coolly; and, when we are cool on surprise, we do not grow agitated on reflection.

The last account I heard from Germany was hostile. Four days ago both the Imperial and Prussian ministers expected news of a battle. O, ye fathers of your people, do you thus dispose of your children? How many thousand lives does a king save that signs a peace! It was said in jest of our Charles II that he was the real father of his people, so many of them did he beget himself. But tell me, ye divines, which is the most virtuous man, he that begets twenty bastards, or he that sacrifices an hundred thousand lives? What a contradiction is human nature! The Romans rewarded the man that got three children, and laid waste the world. When will the world know that peace and propagation are the two most delightful things in it? As his Majesty of France has found out the latter¹, I hope he will not forget the former.

1873. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, July 8, 1778.

I HAVE had some conversation with a ministerial person, on the subject of pacification with France; and he dropped a hint, that as we should not have much chance of a good peace, the opposition would make great clamour on it. I said a few words on the duty of ministers to do what they thought right, be the consequence what it would. But as honest men do not want such lectures, and dishonest will not let them weigh, I waived that theme, to dwell on what is more likely to be persuasive, and which I am firmly persuaded is no less true than the former maxim; and that was, that the ministers are *still* so strong, that if they could

LETTER 1872.—¹ The Queen of France was then breeding for the first time. *Walpole*.

get a peace that would save the nation, though not a brilliant or glorious one, the nation in general would be pleased with it, and the clamours of the opposition be insignificant.

I added, what I think true, too, that no time is to be lost in treating; not only for preventing a blow, but from the consequences the first misfortune would have. The nation is not yet alienated from the court, but it is growing so; is grown so enough, for any calamity to have violent effects. Any internal disturbance would advance the hostile designs of France. An insurrection from distress would be a double invitation to invasion; and, I am sure, much more to be dreaded, even personally, by the ministers, than the ill-humours of opposition for even an inglorious peace. To do the opposition justice, it is not composed of incendiaries. Parliamentary speeches raise no tumults: but tumults would be a dreadful thorough-bass to speeches. The ministers do not know the strength they have left (supposing they apply it in time), if they are afraid of making any peace. They were too sanguine in making war; I hope they will not be too timid of making peace.

What do you think of an idea of mine of offering France a neutrality? that is, to allow her to assist both us and the Americans. I know she would assist only them: but were it not better to connive at her assisting them, without attacking us, than her doing both? A treaty with her would perhaps be followed by one with America. We are sacrificing all the essentials we *can* recover, for a few words; and risking the independence of this country, for the nominal supremacy over America. France seems to leave us time for treating. She made no scruple of begging peace of us in '63, that she might lie by and recover her advantages. Was not that a wise precedent? Does not she *now* show that it was? Is not policy the honour of nations? I mean, not morally, but has Europe left itself any other honour? And

since it has really left itself no honour, and as little morality, does not the morality of a nation consist in its preserving itself in as much happiness as it can? The invasion of Portugal by Spain in the last war, and the partition of Poland, have abrogated the law of nations. Kings have left no ties between one another. Their duty to their people is still allowed. He is a good king that preserves his people; and if temporizing answers that end, is it not justifiable? You, who are as moral as wise, answer my questions. Grotius is obsolete. Dr. Joseph¹ and Dr. Frederic², with four hundred thousand commentators, are reading new lectures—and I should say, thank God, to one another, if the four hundred thousand commentators were not in worse danger than they. Louis XIV is grown a casuist compared to those partitioners. Well, let us simple individuals keep our honesty, and bless our stars that we have not armies at our command, lest we should divide kingdoms that are at our *bienséance*! What a dreadful thing it is for such a wicked little imp as man to have absolute power! But I have travelled into Germany, when I meant to talk to you only of England; and it is too late to recall my text. Good night!

1874. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

July 12, 1778.

MR. LORT has delivered your papers to me, dear Sir; and I have already gone through them. I will try if I can make anything of them, but fear I have not art enough, as I perceive there is absolutely but one fact, the expulsion¹. You have certainly very clearly proved that Mr. Baker was neither supported by Mr. Prior nor Bishop Burnet—but

LETTER 1873.—¹ The Emperor of Germany. *Walpole*.

² Frederick II of Prussia. *Walpole*.

LETTER 1874.—¹ From his fellowship at St. John's College, Cambridge.

these are mere negatives. So is the question whether he intended to compile an *Athenae Cantabrigienses* or not; and on that you say but little, as you have not seen his papers in the Museum. I will examine the printed catalogue, and try if I can discover the truth thence. When I go to town I will also borrow the new *Biographia*, as I wish to know more of the expulsion. As it is our only fact, one would not be too dry on it. Upon the whole, I am inclined to think that it would be preferable to draw up an ample character of Mr. Baker, rather than a life. The one was most beautiful, amiable, conscientious: the other totally barren of more than one event; and though you have taken excellent pains to discover all that was possible, yet there is an obscurity hangs over even the circumstances that did attend him; as his connection with Bishop Crewe² and his living. His own modesty comes out the brighter; but then it composes a character, not a life.

As to Mr. Kippis and his censures, I am perfectly indifferent to them. He betrays a pert malignity in hinting an intention of being severe on my father, for the pleasure of exerting a right I allowed, and do allow, to be a just one—though it is not just to do it for *that* reason—however, let him say his pleasure. The truth will not hurt my father: falsehood will recoil on the author.

His asserting that my censure of Addison's character of Lord Somers³ is not to be justified, is a silly *ipse dixit*, as he does not, in truth cannot, show why it is not to be justified. The passage I objected to is the argument of an old woman; and Mr. Addison having been a writer of true humour is not a justification of his reasoning like a superstitious gossip.

² Lord Crewe, Bishop of Durham, who conferred the living of Long Newton, in Durham, on Baker. The

latter resigned it in 1690.

³ See *Royal and Noble Authors*.

In the other passage you have sent me, Mr. Kippis is perfectly in the right, and corrects me very justly. Had I ever seen Archbishop Abbot's ⁴ preface, with the outrageous mass of flattery on, and lies of James I, I should certainly never have said, 'Honest Abbot could not flatter.' I should have said, and do say, I never saw grosser perversion of truth. One can almost excuse the faults of James when his bishops were such base sycophants. What can a king think of human nature, when it produces such wretches? I am too impartial to prefer Puritans to clergy, or *vice versâ*: when Whitgift ⁵ and Abbot only ran a race of servility and adulation the result is,

that priests of all religions are the same.

James and his Levites were worthy of each other; the golden calf and the idolaters were well coupled; and it is pity they ever came out of the wilderness.

I am very glad Mr. Tyson ⁶ has escaped death and disappointment: pray wish him joy of both from me. Has not this Indian summer dispersed your complaints? We are told we are to be invaded. Our Abbots and Whitgifts now see with what successes and consequences their preaching up a crusado against America has been crowned! Archbishop Markham may have an opportunity of exercising his martial prowess. I doubt he would resemble Bishop Crewe more than good Mr. Baker. Let us respect only those that are Israelites indeed. I surrender Dr. Abbot to you. Church and presbytery are human nonsense, invented by knaves to govern fools. Church and Kirk are terms for monopolies. *Exalted notions of Church matters are*

⁴ George Abbot (1562-1633), Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁵ John Whitgift, D.D. (d. 1604), Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁶ Michael Tyson the antiquary;

he had recovered from a serious illness, and, after a legal dispute, had become Rector of Lambourne, near Ongar, in Essex.

contradictions in terms to the lowliness and humility of the Gospel. There is nothing sublime but the Divinity. Nothing is sacred but as His work. A tree or a brute stone is more respectable as such, than a mortal called an Archbishop, or an edifice called a Church, which are the puny and perishable productions of men. Calvin and Wesley had just the same views as the Popes; power and wealth their objects. I abhor both, and admire Mr. Baker.

P.S. I like popery as well as you, and have shown I do. I like it as I like chivalry and romance. They all furnish one with ideas and visions, which Presbyterianism does not. A Gothic church or a convent fill one with romantic dreams—but for the mysterious, the Church in the abstract, it is a jargon that means nothing, or a great deal too much, and I reject it and its apostles, from Athanasius to Bishop Keene.

1875. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, July 16, 1778.

THOUGH it is a most anxious moment, I do not write to tell you or talk of politics: most men in these regions expect news of a battle at sea¹; I do not. As we have nothing left to save but ourselves, *I wish themselves* would leave themselves and us that little.

Jean Jacques² is certainly dead as well as Voltaire. Poor Charon! 'Fanny, blooming fair',³ died here yesterday of a stroke of palsy. She had lost her memory for some years, and remembered nothing but her beauty and not her Methodism. Being confined with only servants, she was continually lamenting, 'I to be abandoned that all the world used to adore!' She was seventy-two.

LETTER 1875.—¹ Admiral Keppel put to sea for the second time on July 9, 1778.

² Rousseau died on July 2, 1778.

³ Lady Frances Shirley, formerly much admired by Lord Chesterfield.

I received a letter this morning from the engraver of Johnson's *Poets* to inquire if I knew of any portrait of Dyer or Mallet. If the latter is one of Johnson's poets, I do not wonder Gray was not.

The sun seems to be the only prince that is generous, and sticks by us in our distress. People of all ages call it an old-fashioned summer, such as we used to have ten or twenty years ago, when you are to suppose they were young. I that do not haggle about my threescores, do not remember any such summer these fifty years. It is Italy in a green gown.

Mr. Nicholls and I went last week to see the new apartment at Osterley Park. The first chamber, a drawing-room, not a large one, is the most superb and beautiful that can be conceived, and hung with Gobelin tapestry, and enriched by Adam in his best taste, except that he has stuck diminutive heads in bronze, no bigger than a half-crown, into the chimney-piece's hair. The next is a light plain green velvet bedchamber. The bed is of green satin richly embroidered with colours, and with eight columns; too theatric, and too like a modern head-dress, for round the outside of the dome are festoons of artificial flowers. What would Vitruvius think of a dome decorated by a milliner? The last chamber, after these two proud rooms, chills you: it is called the Etruscan, and is painted all over like Wedgwood's ware, with black and yellow small grotesques. Even the chairs are of painted wood. It would be a pretty waiting-room in a garden. I never saw such a profound tumble into the Bathos. It is going out of a palace into a potter's field. Tapestry, carpets, glass, velvet, satin, are all attributes of winter. There could be no excuse for such a cold termination, but its containing a cold bath next to the bedchamber:—and it is called taste to join these incongruities! I hope I have put you into a passion.

1876. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, July 18, 1778.

As I was going out this evening, I was stopped in Twickenham, and told that France has declared war¹. I knew the Brest squadron was at sea, and that Admiral Keppel, by letters received from him at the Admiralty on Thursday, is off the Land's End, in hourly expectation of being joined by three or four men-of-war, which will make his fleet thirty ships of the line, with which he was determined to seek the enemy, who have thirty-one, two of fifty guns, and eight frigates. Thus the battle may be fought as soon as war is proclaimed; and thus our ministers may have a full prospect of all their consummately wise measures may produce! What can be expected from two wars when one has been so ignominious?—With an army of fifty thousand men against a rabble, and without being beaten, they have lost a whole continent, and near half that army, and retreated from place to place! Not one general has gained any reputation; our only fleet on this side of the world is to decide whether the two islands are not to be fought for on land. Thus have we, the people, been gamed for; and some few of us against our wills. It is very hard, especially on us that remember other days. I know not what Lord Mansfield's reflections are, when he recollects his sagacious journey² to Paris to convince the French cabinet that it was against their interest to protect the Americans, and his famous passage of the Rubicon. I should be sorry to feel what he ought to feel even on the score of folly,—indeed *defendit Numerus*; and all that may be left to us few, may be to meet him, *torva tuentes* like the ghost of Dido.

LETTER 1876.—¹ This was not the case.² In the summer of 1774.

England will one day recollect it had a minister to whom it owed twenty years of prosperity and happiness, and who left it a motto that would have preserved such halcyon days. *Quieta non movere* was as wise a saying as any my Lord Bolingbroke bequeathed to my Lord Bute. I do not know whether it is true, what has been said, that my father, on being advised to tax America, replied, 'It must be a bolder minister than I am.' But that motto of his spoke his opinion.

Well; war proclaimed! and I am near sixty-one. Shall I live to see peace again? and what a peace! I endeavour to compose my mind, and call in every collateral aid. I condemn my countrymen, but cannot, would not divest myself of my love to my country. I enjoy the disappointment of the Scots, who had prepared the yoke for the Americans and for our necks too. I cannot blame the French whom we have tempted to ruin us: yet, to be ruined by France!—there the Englishman in me feels again. My chief comfort is in talking to you, though you do not answer me. I write to vent my thoughts, as it is easier than brooding over them, but allow that it is difficult to be very tranquil when the navy of England is at stake. That thought annihilates resentment. I wish for nothing but victory and then peace, yet what lives must victory cost! Nor will one victory purchase it. The nation is so frantic that success would intoxicate us more; yet calamity, that alone could sober us, is too near our doors. Resignation to the will of Heaven is the language of reason as well as of religion, when one knows not what would be best for us. It is a dilemma to which the honest are reduced: our gamesters are in a worse situation. The best they can hope for is to sit down with the *débris* of an empire. What a line they have drawn between them and Lord Chatham! I believe it was modesty made them not

attend his funeral. Will the house of Brunswick listen again to the flatterers of prerogative?

My time of life, that ought to give me philosophy, dispirits me. I cannot expect to live to see England revive. I shall leave it at best an insignificant island. Its genius is vanished like its glories; one sees nor hero nor statesman arise to flatter hope. Dr. Franklin, thanks to Mr. Wedderburn³, is at Paris. Every way I turn my thoughts, the returns are irksome. What is the history of a fallen empire? A transient satire on the vices and follies that hurried it to dissolution. The protest of a few that foretold it is not registered. The names of Jefferies and two or three principals satisfy the sage moralist who hurries to more agreeable times. I will go to bed and sleep, if I can. Pray write to me; tell me how you reconcile your mind to our situation—I cannot. Two years ago I meditated leaving England if it was enslaved. I have no such thought now. I will steal into its bosom when my hour comes, and love it to the last.

1877. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Saturday, July 18, 1778.

YESTERDAY evening the following notices were fixed up in Lloyd's Coffee-house:—That a merchant in the City had received an express from France, that the Brest fleet, consisting of twenty-eight ships of the line, were sailed, with orders to burn, sink, and destroy. That Admiral Keppel was at Plymouth, and had sent to demand three more ships of the line to enable him to meet the French. On these

³ Horace Walpole implies that the hostility towards England of the Americans in general, and of Franklin in particular, was due in great measure to Wedderburn's violent

attack on Franklin at a meeting of the Privy Council in Jan. 1774. (See note on letter to Mason of March 19, 1774.)

notices stocks sunk three and a half per cent. An account I have received this morning from a good hand says, that on Thursday the Admiralty received a letter from Admiral Keppel, who was off the Land's End, saying that the *Worcester* was in sight; that the *Peggy* had joined him, and had seen the *Thunderer* making sail for the fleet; that he was waiting for the *Centaur*, *Terrible*, and *Vigilant*; and that having received advice from Lord Shulldham¹ that the *Shrewsbury* was to sail from Plymouth on Thursday, he should likewise wait for her. His fleet will then consist of thirty ships of the line; and he hoped to have an opportunity of trying his strength with the French fleet on our own coast: if not, he would seek them on theirs. The French fleet sailed on the seventh, consisting of thirty-one ships of the line, two fifty-gun ships, and eight frigates. This state is probably more authentic than those at Lloyd's.

Thus you see how big the moment is! and, unless far more favourable to us in its burst than good sense allows one to promise, it must leave us greatly exposed. Can we expect to beat without considerable loss?—and then, where have we another fleet? I need not state the danger from a reverse. The Spanish Ambassador² certainly arrived on Monday.

I shall go to town on Monday for a day or two; therefore, if you write to-morrow, direct to Arlington Street. I add no more: for words are unworthy of the situation; and to blame now would be childish. It is hard to be gamed for against one's consent: but when one's country is at stake, one must throw oneself out of the question. When one is old, and nobody, one must be whirled with the current, and shake one's wings like a fly, if one lights on a pebble. The prospect is so dark, that one shall rejoice at whatever

LETTER 1877.—¹ Molyneux Shulldham, first Baron Shulldham; d. 1798.

He was Port-Admiral at Plymouth.

² The Marquis of Almadovar.

does not happen that may. Thus I have composed a sort of philosophy for myself, that reserves every possible chance. You want none of these artificial aids to your resolution. Invincible courage and immaculate integrity are not dependent on the folly of ministers or on the events of war. Adieu!

1878. TO CHARLES BEDFORD.

Arlington Street, Wednesday, July 22, 1778.

I WILL be obliged to you if you will look into the Abbey, and see if Mr. Gray's monument is uncovered yet; as, if it is, I will call and see it.

Yours ever,
H. WALPOLE.

1879. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 24, 1778.

UPON reviewing your papers, dear Sir, I think I can make more of them than I at first conceived. I have even commenced the life¹, and do not dislike my ideas for it, if the execution does but answer. At present I am interrupted by another task, which you, too, have wished me to undertake. In a word, somebody has published Chatterton's Works, and charged me heavily for having discountenanced him. He even calls for the indignation of the public against me. It is somewhat singular, that I am to be offered up as a victim at the altar of a notorious impostor! but, as many saints have been impostors, so many innocent persons have been sacrificed to them. However, I shall not be patient under this attack, but shall publish an answer, and the narrative I mentioned to you. I would, as you know, have avoided entering into this affair

LETTER 1879.—¹ The Life of Thomas Baker.

if I could; but as I do not despise public esteem, it is necessary to show how groundless the accusation is. Do not speak of my intention, as perhaps I shall not execute it immediately.

I am not in the least acquainted with the Mr. Bridges you mention, nor know that I ever saw him.

The tomb for Mr. Gray is actually erected, and at the generous expense of Mr. Mason, and with an epitaph of four lines, as you heard, and written by him.—But the scaffolds are not yet removed. I was in town yesterday, and intended to visit it, but there is digging a vault for the family of Northumberland, which obstructs the removal of the boards.

I rejoice in your amendment, and reckon it among my obligations to the fine weather, and hope it will be the most lasting of them.

Yours ever,
H. W.

1880. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, July 24, 1778.

YOURS of the 19th I did not receive till yesterday. I do not write again so soon to answer it, but on a subject very foreign to all my last, and which I will tell you presently, when I have replied to a few of your articles.

I did not discover, and certainly did not suspect, a bacchanalian disposition in a certain person¹, for we dined together but once. We think alike on that subject, I assure you, but I will reserve it for our meeting.

Madame du Deffand said nothing on the strawberries and cream², nor if I asked her would she probably remember

LETTER 1880. — ¹ Rev. Norton Nicholls, who had recently visited Mason at York.

² Mason asked whether Rousseau died of eating strawberries.

to answer. She never interested herself about Rousseau, nor admired him. Her understanding is too just not to be disgusted with his paradoxes and affectations; and his eloquence could not captivate her, for she hates eloquence. She liked no style but Voltaire's, and has an aversion to all modern philosophers. She has scarce mentioned Rousseau, living or dead; and D'Alembert was egregiously mistaken in thinking she wrote my letter to him: Rousseau would have been still more offended had he known how very little she ever thought on him. She was born and had lived in the age of true taste, and allowed nobody but Voltaire to belong to it. She holds that all the rest have corrupted their taste and language. La Fontaine is her idol; that is, simplicity is.

But I shall not forget to answer you on the article of strawberries and cream. How very kind to caution me against them; and how kindly I take it! In truth I am very temperate now on that head, as well as on all others. I eat very little cream, remembering that my stomach is not so young as it was; but for wine, I am persuaded fruit never hurts me, unless wine is poured on it. Yet the other day I did drink two glasses. The excessive heat of the nights had exhausted me so much, that I had recourse to that cordial, and it quite restored me: it would not unless a novelty. I beg your pardon for talking on myself, but gratitude opened my heart. I feel your goodness with great satisfaction, for it could please me in no form more than yours; and I wished to prove to you that one you regard is not childish.

I doubt much whether I can get you a print of the Duchess of Devonshire: certainly not before winter, for Lady Di is at Brighthelmstone; but I will try then: she had not many proofs for herself, and I know had not one left. Everybody, from taste or fashion, tore them away.

The Duke³, her brother, paid for the plate, and would suffer, I think, but two hundred impressions to be taken. I promised the Duke of Gloucester to beg one for him, which perhaps will not be refused. If I can obtain two, the second is yours. I have set my own in a frame I trust you will like, as it harmonizes with it amazingly, though rich.

I have been two days in town. What I could collect was, that the Congress will not deign to send any answer to the Commissioners; that Lord Howe refused to act as one of them, and that the bear and the monkey have quarrelled⁴; that the Americans have sent an expedition to Florida, and that Washington's army is reduced to seven thousand and is very sickly. One should think the two last circumstances were invented to balance the others; but surely our ministers ought at last to exaggerate on the other side, that things may seem to turn out better than was expected rather than worse, as hitherto they have contrived to make them appear.

France has *not* declared war; and if the Brest fleet did sail it was not a stone's-throw. I imagine they wait for news of D'Estains⁵, before they take the last step, or they will draw Keppel aside, and then set forth an embarkation. I sometimes hope peace is not impossible. It cannot be half so bad as a new war in our present situation: it would at least give us time to prepare for war. We are come to the necessity of fortifying the island, or it may be lost in a single battle. When we have no longer the superiority at sea, it would be madness—it would—it is madness to have no resource, no spot where to make a stand: but what signify my politics? who will listen to them?

³ The Duke of Marlborough.

⁴ Governor Johnstone and Lord Carlisle. (See *Last Journals*, vol. ii. p. 284.)

⁵ Comte d'Estaing was in command of a squadron sent to assist the Americans.

It is not unlucky that I have got something to divert my mind; for I can think on other subjects when I have them. I am at last forced to enter into the history of the supposed Rowley's poems. I must write on it, nay, what is more, print, not directly, controversially, but in my own defence. Some jackanapes at Bristol (I don't know who) has published Chatterton's Works; and I suppose to provoke me to tell the story, accuses me of treating that marvellous creature with contempt; which having supposed, contrary to truth, he invites his readers to feel indignation at me. It has more than once before been insinuated that his disappointment from me contributed to his horrid fate. You know how gently I treated him. He was a consummate villain, and had gone enormous lengths before he destroyed himself. It would be cruel indeed, if one was to be deemed the assassin of every rogue that miscarries in attempting to cheat one; in short, the attack is now too direct not to be repelled. Two months ago I did draw up an account of my share in that affair. That narrative and an answer to this insult which I wrote last night I will publish, signed with my name, but not advertised by it. It will reach all those that take part in the controversy, and I do not desire it should go farther. These things I will have transcribed, and ask your leave to send you before they go to the press. I am in no hurry to publish, nor is the moment a decent one; yet I embrace it, as I shall be the less talked over. I hate controversy, yet to be silent now would be interpreted guilt; and it is impossible to be more innocent than I was in that affair. Being innocent, I take care not to be angry. Mr. Tyrwhitt, one of the enthusiasts to Rowley, has recanted, and published against the authenticity of the poems. The new publisher of Chatterton's undisputed works seems to question the rest too, so his attack on me must be mere impertinent curiosity. One satisfaction will arise from all

this: the almost incredible genius of Chatterton will be ascertained. He had generally genuine powers of poetry; often wit, and sometimes natural humour. I have seen reams of his writing, besides what is printed. He had a strong vein of satire, too, and very irascible resentment; yet the poor soul perished before he was nineteen! He had read, and written, as if he was fourscore, yet it cannot be discovered when or where. He had no more principles than if he had been one of all our late administrations. He was an instance that a complete genius and a complete rogue can be formed before a man is of age. The world has generally the honour of their education, but it is not necessary; you see by Chatterton that an individual could be as perfect as a senate! Adieu!

1881. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Aug. 4, 1778.

For these three weeks I have been constantly waiting for news from sea; for to tell you that nothing had happened was telling you nothing. We are in the oddest situation that can be; at war, in fact, but managed like a controversy in divinity: we and France write against each other, and do each other all the hurt we can, but do not own we are enemies. The communication is open, the packet-boats pass as usual, and French and English are allowed to go to Paris and to come to London, as if to compare notes on all that happens. I am not sorry that this Christian plausibility is preserved; it may facilitate peace without the tediousness of a formal treaty. The two countries have nothing to do but to declare hostilities are at an end.

On Saturday last we thought we had gained a double festival for the first of August. Admiral Keppel's captain arrived, and a rumour spread that he had taken or destroyed



Admiral Hon. Augustus Keppel
From a painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.

seventeen of the Brest fleet. It was not for want of will or endeavours if he has not. He had placed himself between that squadron and port, and tried to force them to battle; which they obstinately declined, till he came so near that they fired on him. He desired no more, and the fight began smartly; but, the wind favouring the French, they kept sailing away, but pouring all their broadsides on his masts and rigging, which they damaged a good deal. This flying fight lasted two hours, and our admiral promised himself a complete battle the next day: but, as the French meant mischief and not glory, at daybreak they were vanished—in short, got into port; and Keppel is returned to Plymouth, heartily chagrined that his enemies are so little ashamed of running away¹.

There is as little prospect of laurels from Byron's squadron². Both his fleet and D'Estaing's have suffered by a great storm. Nor are we likely to have more olives than laurels. The Congress has treated our Commissioners with SOVEREIGN contempt; and the Commissioners themselves have quarrelled, and are coming home. Thus we have begged peace of those we bullied, and only been laughed at. We seem to have wearied fortune in the last war.

Cæsar³ seems to have made as bad a figure as we. After usurping Bavaria, he is forced to beg peace too. They say he is convinced of having been in the wrong, by a renunciation that has been found of the Emperor Albert⁴. It is the first time a hero at the head of two hundred and twenty thousand men was ever convinced by an old parchment! His imperial reason did not deign to listen to law and equity in the dismemberment of Poland; nor would he now,

LETTER 1881.—¹ Admiral Keppel's indecisive action with the French fleet under the Comte d'Orvilliers took place on July 27, 1778.

² Admiral Byron had been sent to

the North American station in order to intercept D'Estaing.

³ The Emperor Joseph II.

⁴ Albert II, 1437-1439.

I ween, if Lord Chief Justice Frederic had not enclosed him with more numerous armies. We did not pay much regard to the charters of America, till France helped the latter to carry on the suit.

I am very anxious for the confirmation of this pacification in Germany; for the Duke of Gloucester was just setting out to make the campaign under the King of Prussia. It was worthy of his spirit, and nobody dared to remonstrate against it; and yet the physicians think he could not support an autumnal campaign. The Duchess herself has only shed floods of tears, but not murmured. The behaviour of both does them infinite honour.

Your friends, the Mackenzies⁵, are arrived, and Mrs. Anne Pitt is expected daily. Mrs. Foote's friend, old Lady Westmorland⁶, is dead, and the ancient beauty, Lady Fanny Shirley⁷; she had lost her head some time, and her senses before, for she has made Lady Huntingdon⁸ her heir, having turned Methodist when she was no longer admired.

Our summer is as Italian as yours: I do not remember such an one. Adieu!

1882. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 10, 1778.

I DID not write to you on our naval skirmish, because I had nothing to add to what you saw in the papers. It is evident the French had orders to risk nothing, and accordingly they got out of the scrape as fast as they could, yet they pretend that our fleet retired first. If it had, we should

⁵ James Stuart Mackenzie, only brother of Lord Bute, married Lady Elizabeth Campbell, third daughter of John, Duke of Argyll.—*Walpole*.

⁶ Daughter of a son of the first Duke of Devonshire.—*Walpole*.

⁷ Formerly a great beauty, ad-

mired and celebrated by Lord Chesterfield, who wrote on her the well-known song, 'When Fanny, blooming fair.'—*Walpole*.

⁸ Lady Selina Shirley, niece of Lady Fanny, and patroness of the Methodists.—*Walpole*.

have taken as much pains to charge Mr. Keppel as they could. The consequences are and probably will be good. Their flight will not encourage them, and it has saved our East India fleet, which is all come in. I have heard enough to make me change my mind about Spain, who, I believe, will join in the *mêlée*, unless we are awed into peace, which I cannot but suppose is the meaning of the war going on in this equivocal shape. I expect to hear some *beau matin* that everything is compromised. There are reasons both good and bad why it ought not to surprise one.

I have lengthened my Chattertonian pamphlet, and now think shall not publish it. It will clear me whenever it does appear, and I have rather more respect for posterity than for the present generations, who have evidently lost all ideas of right and wrong; but I will say no more on two topics of so little worth as the present age and myself.

In lieu of everything else, I here send you an original indeed,—the preface to Rousseau's *Mémoires*, which is got out, though the work itself is, I believe, not yet published. The style, the singularity, the intolerable vanity, speak it genuine;—nay, so does the laboured eloquence, which would be sublime if it were not affected frenzy, and worse. I wish you not to give copies, because, should it be discovered, I should be said to have spread it to his prejudice; yet I have none, nor am angry with him by the common rule, because I offended him. So far from it, I have always allowed his masterly genius, and was only angry with him for his own sake, that he, who was born to be superior in common sense, should have stooped to build his fame on paradox, and seemed to choose rather to be talked of for the singularity of his writings, than for their excellence; but this preface goes farther, much farther.—He aims at being the capital figure at the last day. I send it to you, shocking as it is: *la voici*.—

‘Je forme une entreprise qui n’eut jamais d’exemples, et dont l’exécution n’aura point d’imitateurs. Je vais montrer à mes semblables un homme dans toute la vérité de la nature, et cet homme c’est moi.

‘Moi seul je sens mon cœur et connois les hommes ; je ne suis fait comme aucun de ceux que j’ai vus ; j’ose croire n’être fait comme aucun de ceux qui existent. Je ne vaudrais pas mieux ou moins, je suis autre. Si la nature a bien ou mal fait de briser le moule dans lequel elle m’a jeté, c’est ce dont on ne peut juger qu’après m’avoir lu. Que la trompette du Jugement dernier sonne quand elle voudra, je viendrai, ce livre à la main, me présenter devant le Souverain Juge. Je dirai hautement, “Voilà ce que j’ai fait, ce que j’ai pensé, ce que je suis. J’ai dit le bien et le mal avec la même franchise ; je n’ai rien tu, rien déguisé, rien pallié ; je me suis montré coupable et vil quand je l’ai été ; j’ai montré mon intérieur comme tu l’as vu toi-même, Être Éternel. Rassemble autour de moi l’innombrable foule de mes semblables ; qu’ils écoutent mes confessions, qu’ils rougissent de mes indignités, qu’ils gémissent de mes misères ; que chacun dévoile à son tour son cœur aux pieds de ton trône, et qu’un seul te dise ensuite, je suis meilleur que cet homme-là.”’

What can one see in this rhapsody of insufferable pride but a studied delirium, an arrogant humiliation, a confession turned into a bravado,—and for what theatre ! and before whom ! Cartouche¹ might have proposed to talk in such a style at the Day of Judgement. Think of the audacious insect allotting to himself a mould made on purpose, intending to be the orator of that moment, and demanding to have all mankind judged by comparison with him ! To meditate a gasconade for the end of the world !

LETTER 1882.—¹ Louis Dominique Cartouche, a famous thief, executed in 1721.

Suppose, instead of her modest contrite deportment, Mary Magdalen had stalked into the hall of the Pharisee with the air of a street-walker, and had bawled out: 'Let the trumpet sound. I declare myself the greatest strumpet in Jerusalem. Here is the list of my whoredoms, who dares own as much? and yet who are chaster than I?' I hope a friend of ours will be cured of his enthusiasm to this new Erostratus, who has burnt the temple of Modesty to make himself talked of. Here I finish: it is impossible to add anything that would be of a piece with this rant.

1883. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 15, 1778.

YOUR observation of Rowley not being mentioned by William of Wyrcestre is very strong, indeed, dear Sir, and I shall certainly take notice of it. It has suggested to me too, that he is not by Bale¹ or Pitts², is he? Will you trouble yourself to look? I conclude he is not, or we should have heard of it. Rowley is the reverse of King Arthur, and all those heroes that have been expected a second time: he is to come again for the first time—I mean as a great poet.

My defence amounts to thirty pages of the size of this paper; yet I believe I shall not publish it. I abhor a controversy, and what is it to me whether people believe in an impostor or not? Nay, shall I convince everybody of my innocence, though there is not the shadow of reason for thinking I was to blame? If I met a beggar in the street, and refused him sixpence, thinking him strong enough to work, and two years afterwards he should die of drinking,

LETTER 1883.—¹ John Bale (1495–1563), Bishop of Ossory, author of a history of English literature.

² John Pits, D.D. (1560–1616), Roman Catholic divine and writer of biography.

might not I be told I had deprived the world of a capital rope-dancer? In short, to show oneself sensible to such accusations would only invite more; and since they accuse me of contempt, I will have it for my accusers.

My brass plate for Bishop Walpole³ was copied exactly from the print in Dart's *Westminster*, of the tomb of Robert Dalby⁴, Bishop of Durham, with the sole alteration of the name.

I shall return, as soon as I have time, to Mr. Baker's Life: but I shall want to consult you, or, at least the account of him in the new *Biographia*, as your notes want some dates. I am not satisfied yet with what I have sketched; but I shall correct it. My small talent was grown very dull. This attack about Chatterton has a little revived it, but it warns me to have done, for, if one comes to want provocatives, the produce will soon be feeble. Adieu!

Yours most sincerely,
H. W.

1884. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 21, 1778.

I THINK it so very uncertain whether this letter will find you, that I write it merely to tell you I received yours to-day. I recollect nothing particularly worth seeing in Sussex that you have not seen (for I think you have seen Cowdray and Stansted¹, and I know you have Petworth), but Hurst Monceaux, near Battle; and I don't know whether it is not pulled down. The site of Arundel

³ Ralph de Walpole (d. 1302), Bishop of Ely.

⁴ There was no Robert Dalby, Bishop of Durham; Horace Walpole was perhaps thinking of William Dudley, Bishop of Durham, who died

in 1483, and who was buried in Westminster Abbey.

LETTER 1884.—¹ Stansted Park, near Racton, in Sussex, a seat of the Earl of Scarborough.

Castle is fine, and there are some good tombs of the Fitzalans at the church, but little remains of the castle; in the room of which is a modern brick house; and in the late Duke's time the ghost of a giant walked there, his Grace said—but I suppose the present Duke has laid it in the Red Sea—of claret.

Besides Knowle and Penshurst, I should think there were several seats of old families in Kent worth seeing; but I do not know them. I poked out Summer Hill² for the sake of the *Babylonienne* in Grammont; but it is now a mere farm-house. Don't let them persuade you to visit Leeds Castle, which is not worth seeing.

You have been near losing me and half a dozen fair cousins to-day. The Goldsmiths' Company dined in Mr. Shirley's³ field, next to Pope's. I went to Ham with my three Waldegrave nieces and Miss Keppel, and saw them land, and dine in tents erected for them from the opposite shore. You may imagine how beautiful the sight was in such a spot and in such a day! I stayed and dined at Ham, and after dinner Lady Dysart with Lady Bridget Tollemache took our four nieces on the water to see the return of the barges, but were to set me down at Lady Browne's. We were, with a footman and the two watermen, ten in a little boat. As we were in the middle of the river, a larger boat full of people drove directly upon us on purpose. I believe they were drunk. We called to them, to no purpose; they beat directly against the middle of our little skiff—but, thank you, did not do us the least harm—no thanks to them. Lady Malpas was in Lord Strafford's garden, and gave us for gone. In short, Neptune never would have had so beautiful a prize as the four girls.

² See note on letter to Bentley of Aug. 5, 1752.

³ Hon. George Shirley, second son

of first Earl Ferrers by his second wife; d. 1787.

I hear an express has been sent to — to offer him the Mastership of the Horse. I had a mind to make you guess, but you never can—to Lord Exeter! Pray let me know the moment you return to Park Place.

1885. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 22, 1778.

I BEG you will feel no uneasiness, dear Sir, at having shown my narrative to Dr. Glynn. I can never suspect you, who are always giving me fresh proofs of your friendship, and solicitude for my reputation, of doing anything unkind. It is true, I do not think I shall publish anything about Chatterton. Is not it an affront to innocence, not to be perfectly satisfied in her? My pamphlet, for such it would be, is four times as large as the narrative in your hands, and, I think, would not discredit me—but, in truth, I am grown much fonder of peace than fame; and scribblers or their patrons shall not provoke me to sacrifice the one to the other. Lord Hardwicke, I know, has long been my enemy—latterly, to get a sight of the Conway Papers, he has paid great court to me, which, to show how little I regarded his enmity, I let him see, at least the most curious. But as I set as little value on his friendship, I did not grant another of his requests. Indeed, I have made more than one foe by not indulging the vanity of those that have made application to me; and I am obliged to them, when they augment my contempt by quarrelling with me for that refusal. It was the case of Mr. Masters, and is now of Lord Hardwicke. He solicited me to reprint his *Boeotian* volume of Sir Dudley Carleton's Papers, for which he had two motives. The first he inherited from his father, the desire of saving money; for though his fortune is so much larger than mine, he knew I would not let out my

press for hire, but should treat him with the expense, as I have done for those I have obliged. The second inducement was, that the rarity of my editions makes them valuable, and though I cannot make men read dull books, I can make them purchase them. His Lordship, therefore, has bad grace in affecting to overlook one, whom he had in vain courted; yet he again is grown my enemy, because I would not be my own. For my writings, they do not depend on him, or the venal authors he patronizes (I doubt very frugally), but on their own merits or demerits. It is from men of sense they must expect their sentence, not from boobies and hireling authors, whom I have always shunned with the whole fry of minor wits, critics, and monthly censors.

I have not seen the review you mention, nor ever do, but when something particular is pointed out to me. Literary squabbles I know preserve one's name, when one's works will not; but I despise the fame that depends on scolding till one is remembered—and remembered by whom? the scavengers of literature! Reviewers are like sextons, who, in a charnel-house, can tell you to what John Thompson or to what Tom Matthews such a skull or such belonged—but who wishes to know? The fame that is only to be found in such vaults, is like the fires that burn unknown in tombs, and go out as fast as they are discovered. Lord Hardwicke is welcome to live among the dead if he likes it, and can contrive to exist nowhere else.

Chatterton did abuse me under the title of Baron of Otranto, but unluckily the picture is more like Dr. Milles, and Chatterton's own devotees, than to me, who am but a recreant antiquary, and, as the poor lad found by experience, did not swallow every fragment that was offered to me as antique; though that is a feature he has bestowed on me.

I have seen, too, the criticism you mention on the *Castle of Otranto*, in the preface to the *English Baron*. It is not at all oblique ; but, though mixed with high compliments, directly attacks the visionary part, which, says the author or authoress, makes one laugh. I do assure you, I have not had the smallest inclination to return that attack. It would even be ungrateful, for the work is a professed imitation of mine, only stripped of the marvellous ; and so entirely stripped, except in one awkward attempt at a ghost or two, that it is the most insipid dull nothing you ever saw. It certainly does not make one laugh : for what makes one doze, seldom makes one merry.

I am very sorry to have talked for near three pages on what relates to myself, who should be of no consequence, if people did not make me so, whether I will or not. My not replying to them, I hope, is a proof I do not seek to make myself the topic of conversation.—How very foolish are the squabbles of authors ! They buzz and are troublesome for a day, and then repose for ever on some shelf in a college library, close by their antagonists, like Henry VI and Edward IV at Windsor.

I shall be in town in a few days, and will send you the heads of painters, which I left there ; and along with them, for yourself, a translation of a French play, that I have just printed here. It is not for your reading, but as one of the Strawberry editions, and one of the rarest, for I have printed but seventy-five copies. It was to oblige Lady Craven, the translatress ; and will be an aggravation of my offence to *Sir Dudley's State Papers*.

I hope this Elysian summer, for it is above Indian, has dispersed all your complaints. Yet it does not agree with fruit ; the peaches and nectarines are shrivelled to the size of damsons ; and half of them drop. Yet you remember what portly bellies the peaches had at Paris, where it is

generally as hot. I suppose our fruit-trees are so accustomed to rain, that they don't know how to behave without it. Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. W.

P.S. I can divert you with a new adventure, that has happened to me in the literary way. About a month ago, I received a letter from a Mr. Jonathan Scott at Shrewsbury, to tell me he was possessed of a MS. of Lord Herbert's account of the court of France, which he designed to publish by subscription, and which he desired me to subscribe to, and to assist in the publication. I replied, that having been obliged to the late Lord Powis and his widow, I could not meddle with any such thing, without knowing that it had the consent of the present Earl and his mother. Another letter, commending my reserve, told me Mr. Scott had applied for it formerly, and would again now. This showed me they did not consent. I have just received a third letter, owning the approbation is not yet arrived; but to keep me employed in the meantime, the modest Mr. Scott, whom I never saw, nor know more of than I did of Chatterton, proposes to me to get his fourth son a place in the civil department in India, the father not choosing it should be in the military, his three elder sons being engaged in that branch already.—If this fourth son breaks his neck, I suppose it will be laid to my charge!

P.S. 25th.—I shall send the prints to the coach tomorrow.

1886. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Aug. 25, 1778.

You tell me, my dear Sir, that you depend so entirely on me for intelligence, at least for the confirmation of public events, that I must not let yesterday's *Gazette* go away to-night without writing you a line. Military narratives are apt to be a little oracular, and ours of late have wanted some additional obscurity. You will collect from yesterday's that General Clinton's army did get to New York, though with some difficulty, which, ministerially, you are to take for a victory; and, wherever any darkness hangs over it, you must clear it up on our side. I divine that Washington was ill served, for he has brought two of his generals¹ to a court martial; and the excessive heats seem to have fought against both armies. This is the quintessence of what I know of the matter; and, upon the whole, the Royal army has gained an escape—I doubt, not much to their comfort; for they find no plenty at New York, and Monsieur D'Estaing blocks up the fleet there: so, probably, accounts will not mend.

Our fleet at home has not sailed again. There are rumours of dissensions between Admiral Keppel and Sir Hugh Palliser², and even of a duel between them; which, however, I have heard from no good authority: in short, I have nothing agreeable to tell you, and I do not love to send anything that is not to the glory of my country 'cross the Channel.

LETTER 1886.—¹ General Lee was tried by court martial, and was suspended from command for a year.

² Vice-Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser (1723–1796), first Baronet, third in command under Keppel. Palliser disobeyed Keppel's signals during the indecisive action of July 27, 1778. He and Keppel were on bad

terms, but fought no duel. Palliser afterwards applied for a court martial on Keppel, which resulted in the latter's acquittal. Palliser was subsequently appointed Governor of Greenwich Hospital, in spite of a strong protest on the part of the House of Commons.

The German peace³ seems to halt. I should think it, however, still in agitation, as no considerable action has happened. The Duke of Gloucester has yet received no answer from the Prussian, but expects it this week. He is determined to go if he is accepted—to every peril indeed, for his strength is not equal to it.

We have had the most marvellous summer that I ever remember in all my days. It is still sultry; and I am suffering, though I write between every open door and window in a back-room where the sun never enters. The harvest is prodigious; and we might have wine and oil, had we made preparations for them. I am astonished my nephew preserves any sense (I do not hear he does, much), it shows his disorder is more periodic than eventual.

The Duke of Ancaster is dead, and the Mastership of the Horse to be disposed of. This would have been an object in some summers; but we do not want topics of conversation at present. I used to make excuses for the shortness of my letters at this season. That is not the case at present. I have given you the reason in the line at the top of this page⁴. Adieu!

1887. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Arlington Street, Aug. 25, 1778.

You have put an end, my dear Sir, to my thoughts of publishing my narrative, for you have said in four lines all that I have been trying to say in thirty pages; so my *native eloquence*, which your partiality honours, proves what I have long suspected it was, only easy verbiage. In the early part of my life I wished to have it known that I was

³ Peace was not concluded until May 1779.

⁴ *Vide* end of the second paragraph. *Walpole*.

not a fool—doctors differ on the method and on the success: now, when I was grown much more indifferent to fame, you have bestowed on me more than I should ever have presumed to ask. I am now like people that have a ticket to Richmond Park, which they lend to others when they can go in without, by being known to be in favour with the proprietor; or like country squires returned for two places, who make their option for the county, and resign their family borough, on which perhaps there is not a tene-ment left standing. I choose my niche in your verses¹; and my namesakes (my uncle, my cousin, and his son) shall be welcome to all the memory that shall remain of writings under the appellation of H. W., reserving only what is said of individual me in the Life of Gray, whose monument, by the way, I shall visit to-morrow.

I must not say more of your poetry, because it is the only poetry of yours to which I may be partial; but when I have told you how exceedingly I am flattered by being immortalized in it, you may be sure I am content with my patent. I must too say no more, because without blending myself with you at least indirectly, I know not how to commend, and I should be the falsest as well as the vainest of mortals, if I made the smallest comparison between us. I hope you think I know enough of poetry, not to confound the genuine heir of the right line with a maker of prose—for poet, Phœbus knows I am not, and if I do not waive every sort of pretension, it is only that you may not have bestowed an encomium on a subject totally worthless.

I should have replied to your last sooner, if I had been sure that you were not set out on your tour. I shall be ready to set out for Nuneham whenever I receive my summons.

LETTER 1887.—¹ An *Epistle* in verse addressed by Mason to Horace Walpole.

It is but this moment that I am come to town, and would fulfil the duty of gratitude, before I inquired about the new engagement² in America. For the *Gazette* account, I do not understand it, which is being a good subject, for, like other such relations, it is only meant to confound. All I do know is that on Sunday night the undisciplined courtiers spoke of it in most dismal terms. If I guess right Washington was ill served, and thence, and by the violent heats, could not effect all his purpose; but an army on a march through a hostile country, that is twice beaten back, which is owned, whose men drop down with heat, have no hospitals, and were hurrying to a place of security, must have lost more than 380 men. In fact they were hurrying whence they could not stay into the last trap. They will be starved into surrender or desperation at New York; and D'Estaing is blocking up our port and fleet, and a swingeing lie will the *Gazette* have to tell, if both army and fleet are taken.

The papers say that Keppel and Palliser have fought a duel; I do not know how truly. The reason given in the papers is *not* the true, if another that has been whispered is; namely that Palliser did not obey Keppel's signal, though the former at first behaved bravely; and is not suspected of want of spirit, but of Mindenian *finesse*, and that by secret order of the Trident-bearer³. Keppel was much insulted at Plymouth, by the same direction as supposed; and that provocation may have brought out what was at first suppressed. However, I affirm nothing of all this, though I have heard enough by different channels to incline me to believe there is an appearance of foundation in the groundwork; though it is impossible to conceive that

² The action fought at Monmouth York.

Court House on June 28, 1778, during Clinton's retreat to New

³ The Earl of Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty.

revenge could have blinded an old politician so far, as to have made him lose all sight of the advantage that would have accrued even to himself from a victory.

In short, disgraces and misfortunes thicken so fast, that I believe there will be no time to unravel half, while there is an opportunity, supposing there were one. History will be forced to poke and patch out scraps, and when the whole is a heap of ruins, some David Hume will be to compose a system of wise and virtuous motives, which always tend to produce folly and crimes, and then the induction will be, that nobody should be wise and virtuous. Adieu ! Adieu !

P.S. You may imagine I am impatient for the sequel⁴.

1888. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Aug. 2[6?], 1778.

I HAVE seen Gray's monument. The absolutely necessary position is very disadvantageous to it, and prevents any grace in the outline ; his nose is a little too aquiline, but both his head and the Muse's are well executed ; her body is a little flat, and her legs, from the same want of place, too small and crowded ; your epitaph and friendship are the most shining ingredients.

When I mention your friendship for him, I recollect that I was too much intoxicated in my last with your partiality to me. I mean that I did not receive it with humility enough ; but in the satisfaction of being recorded by you forgot how little I deserve it. As there has been so much of blamable in my life, I am conscious that I ought to desire to be spoken of by my enemies, and not by my friends, that the truth may be told, not palliated. To ask

⁴ The sequel to the *Epistle* mentioned above.

that would be an artful way of avoiding it. I have been told, that what I begged you to say of my being the first to blame in my differences with Gray, persuaded some that the reverse was true. I am sure *that* was not my intention; and I would say it still more strongly, if it would not look affected. I have a horror for any praise that one does not deserve: humility is next to vainglory, if it is put on, and has no merit but in avoiding impudence. Simplicity is the medium to be sought, and silence about oneself the surest way of being simple. A corner in your writings which you have allotted to me, I am not lowly enough to waive; but I have regard enough for you to desire that you should never say anything of me that you may be ashamed of. Remember, your writings will be standards, and remember too that Pope's blindness to Bolingbroke took off the edge of half his satires. I shall not suffer you to hurt your own fame in compliment to me; early and late have I despised Cicero's *orna me*. Has one better claim to praise one has not earned, than to money one has stolen? And to beg one's friend to lie for one! No, my dear Sir, there are a few honest good men that deserve such verses as yours: I should think I robbed them, while they want your praise.

28 Aug. I had written thus far, when I received your second part¹ by Mr. Alderson. You desire me not to write, but to bring you my answer, and odd as the request is, I shall obey it, for two reasons; the first is, that the impression of your seal is so sharp, that I am convinced all or most of those you send by the post have been opened; the second is, that your modesty would not permit me to tell you to your face how much I am charmed with your poetry. You have an original talent for this style, that without resembling either, is much more like Horace's than Pope's was; and instead of piddling with petty dunces, you

LETTER 1888.—¹ The second part of Mason's *Epistle* to Walpole.

gibbet greater dunces and much greater rogues. Nay, you do what History cannot; for you record their villainies, and if History's majestic gravity could contrive to register them, yet nobody would read what ought to be enrolled only by the Ordinary of Newgate; but when you make your readers laugh at our state culprits, they will remember them.

There are two odd rencontres in your second part that I must mention. You have introduced the Duke of Richmond, who is one of the virtuous few that is worthy of such a pen as yours (and was in my eye in the foregoing page), and you have brought in Pope, and Lord Mansfield, which I have done too in my narrative, as you will see, though for a different quotation; but, in short, you have made my narrative useless; you have anticipated it by inspiration, and Apollo has made you a prophet as well as a poet. I that knew all the circumstances, have told tediously what you, by magic I think, have set in a ten times clearer light and compendiously. And as I owed to you and Gray the confirmation of my doubts at first, you have told all that is necessary of my story for me, and made it entertaining. Remember this is not to flatter you, and draw more panegyric from you. You have justified me in as innocent a transaction as any of my life, and I am more than satisfied, and the best way of thanking you is to be jealous of your honour, and to turn it on more meritorious objects. I do not deserve praise: to justify the innocent is worthy of you. If I was not irreproachable on the article of Chatterton, I assure you I would tell you so, for instead of being pleased with your defence, it would aggravate my contrition, and therefore I beg you will never put me to shame. My parts are moderate, and I trouble my head little about them; but I would give a pound of them, if I have so much, for an ounce more of virtues.

The crisis of this country will soon put all men to the test; brand the guilty and reward the good; and since the fountain of honour is now the channel of corruption, wrench the chalice from his hand and dispense the waters to the deserving. The moment is coming, I think, when the constitution may be restored, though not the empire. If they who call themselves patriots flinch from their duty, they will deserve your lash, still more than the present crew. I have no great hopes, though the moment is so propitious (as it is a repetition of precedent lessons) for showing that the folly of tyranny leads directly to the destruction of darling prerogative. I have sometimes thought, so servile has been the copy, that Lord Mansfield has drawn out the steps of James II, and recommended them one by one, in order to ruin the house of Hanover by the same manœuvres that paved their way to the crown. Or he was a woful or a most presumptuous politician, to flatter himself he could succeed where Jefferies and Jesuits failed. In short, he and the Scotch have no way of redeeming the credit of their understandings, but by avowing that they have been consummate villains. *Stavano bene; per star meglio, stanno qui.*

1889. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Sept. 1, 1778.

I HAVE NOW seen the *Critical Review*, with Lord Hardwicke's note, in which I perceive the sensibility of your friendship for me, dear Sir, but no rudeness on his part. Contemptuous it was to reprint Jane Shore's letter without any notice of my having given it before; the apology, too, is not made to me—but I am not affected by such incivilities, that imply more ill-will than boldness. As I expected more from your representation, I believe I expressed myself

with more warmth than the occasion deserved; and, as I love to be just, I will, now I am perfectly cool, be so to Lord H. His dislike of me was meritorious in him, as I conclude it was founded on my animosity to *his* father, as mine had been, from attachment to *my own*, who was basely betrayed by the late Earl. The present has given me formerly many peevish marks of enmity; and I suspect, I don't know if justly, that he was the mover of the cabal in the Antiquarian Society against me—but all their misunderstandings were of a size that made me smile rather than provoked me. The Earl, as I told you, has since been rather wearisome in applications to me, which I received very civilly, but encouraged no farther. When he wanted me to be his printer, I own I was not good Christian enough not to be pleased with refusing, and yet in as well-bred excuses as I could form, pleading, what was true at the time, as you know, that I had laid down my press—but so much for this idle story. I shall think no more of it, but adhere to my specific system. The Antiquarians will be as ridiculous as they used to be; and, since it is impossible to infuse taste into them, they will be as dry and dull as their predecessors. One may revive what perished, but it will perish again, if more life is not breathed into it than it enjoyed originally. Facts, dates, and names will never please the multitude, unless there is some style and manner to recommend them, and unless some novelty is struck out from their appearance. The best merit of the Society lies in their prints; for their volumes, no mortal will ever touch them but an antiquary. Their Saxon and Danish discoveries are not worth more than monuments of the Hottentots; and for Roman remains in Britain, they are upon a foot with what ideas we should get of Inigo Jones, if somebody was to publish views of huts and houses that our officers run up at Senegal and Goree. Bishop

Lyttelton used to torment me with barrows, and Roman camps; and I would as soon have attended to the turf graves in our churchyards. I have no curiosity to know how awkward and clumsy men have been in the dawn of arts, or in their decay.

I exempt you entirely from my general censure on antiquaries, both for your singular modesty in publishing nothing yourself, and for collecting stone and bricks for others to build with. I wish your materials may ever fall into good hands—perhaps they will! Our empire is falling to pieces; we are relapsing to a little island. In that state, men are apt to inquire how great their ancestors have been? And, when a kingdom is past doing anything, the few that are studious look into the memorials of past time; nations, like private persons, seek lustre from their progenitors, when they have none in themselves, and the farther they are from the dignity of their source. When half its colleges are tumbled down, the ancient University of Cambridge will revive from your collections, and you will be quoted as a living witness that saw it in its splendour!

Since I began this letter, I have had another curious adventure. I was in the Holbein chamber, when a chariot stopped at my door. A letter was brought up—and who should be below but—Dr. Kippis. The letter was to announce himself and his business; flattered me on my writings, desired my assistance, and particularly my direction and aid for his writing the life of my father. I desired he would walk up, and received him very civilly, taking not the smallest notice of what you had told me of his flirts at me in the new *Biographia*. I told him, that if I had been applied to, I could have pointed out many errors in the old edition, but as they were chiefly in the printing, I supposed they would be corrected. With regard to my father's life, I said, it might be partiality, but I had such confidence in

my father's virtues, that I was satisfied the more his life was examined, the clearer they would appear. That I also thought that the life of any man written under the direction of his family did nobody honour; and that, as I was persuaded my father's would stand the test, I wished that none of his relations should interfere in it. That I did not doubt but the Doctor would speak impartially, and that was all I desired. He replied, that he did suppose I thought in that manner, and that all he asked was to be assisted in facts and dates. I said, if he would please to write the life first, and then communicate it to me, I would point out any errors in facts that I should perceive. He seemed mighty well satisfied—and so we parted—but is it not odd, that people are continually attacking me, and then come to me for assistance?—but when men write for profit, they are not very delicate.

I have resumed Mr. Baker's Life, and pretty well arranged my plan; but I shall have little time to make any progress till October, as I am going soon to make some visits.

I hope you have received the heads of the painters.

Yours ever,

H. W.

1890. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 10, 1778.

I WRITE a few words to satisfy you, dear Sir, that I received both your letters together. If I did not mention them, you might think the franked one had strayed.

I rejoice that the heat of the weather has been so serviceable to you, and I hope the little return of tenderness in your feet will not last, as the season continues so dry.

I have run through the new articles in the *Biographia*,

LETTER 1890.—Hitherto dated Sept. 18.

and think them performed but with a heavy hand. Some persons have not trusted the characters of their ancestors, as I did my father's, to their own merit. On the contrary, I have met with one whose corruption is attempted to be palliated by imputing its punishment to the revenge of *my father*—which, by the way, is confessing the guilt of the convict. This was the late Lord Barrington¹, who, I believe, was a very dirty fellow: for, besides being expelled the House of Commons on the affair of the Harburgh lottery, he was reckoned to have twice sold the Dissenters to the court—but, in short, what credit can a *Biographia Britannica*, which ought to be a standard work, deserve, when the editor is a mercenary writer, who runs about to relations for directions, and adopts any tale they deliver to him? This very instance is a proof that it is not a jot more creditable than a peerage. The authority is said to be a nephew of Judge Foster (consequently, I suppose, a friend of Judge Barrington²), and he pretends to have found a scrap of paper, nobody knows on what occasion written, that seems to be connected with nothing, and is called a palliative, if not an excuse, of Lord B.'s crime. A man is expelled from Parliament for a scandalous job, and it is called a sufficient excuse to say the minister was his enemy; and this, near forty years after the death of both! and without any impeachment of the justice of the sentence! Instead of which, we are told that Lord B. was *suspected* of having offended Sir R. W., who took that opportunity of being revenged.—Supposing he did; which at most you see was a suspicion grounded on a suspicion, it would at least imply, that he had found a good opportunity. A most admirable acquittal! Sir R. Walpole was expelled for

¹ John Shute Barrington (1678–1734), first Viscount Barrington.

² Hon. Daines Barrington (1727–1800), fourth son of first Viscount

Barrington; at this time second Justice of Chester. He was the friend and correspondent of Gilbert White.

having endorsed a note that was not for his own benefit, nor ever supposed to be ; and it was the act of a whole outrageous party ; yet, abandoned as Parliaments sometimes are, a minister would not find them very complaisant in gratifying his private revenge against a member without some notorious crime. Not a syllable is said of any defence the culprit made ; and, had my father been guilty of such violence and injustices, it is totally incredible that he, whose minutest acts and his most innocent were so rigorously scrutinized, tortured, and blackened, should never have heard that act of power complained of. The present Lord Barrington, who opposed him, saw his fall, and the Secret Committee appointed to canvass his life, and when a retrospect of twenty years was desired, and only ten allowed, would certainly have pleaded for the longer term, had he had anything to say in behalf of his father's sentence. Would so warm a Patriot then, though so obedient a courtier now, have suppressed the charge to this hour ? This Lord B., when I was going to publish the second edition of my *Noble Authors*, begged it as a favour of me to suppress all mention of his father—a strong presumption that he was ashamed of him—I am well repaid ! but I am certainly now at liberty to record that good man. I shall—and shall take notice of the satisfactory manner in which his sons have whitewashed their patriarch !

I recollect a saying of the present peer that will divert you when contrasted with forty years of servility, which even in this age makes him a proverb. It was in his days of virtue. He said, 'If I should ever be so unhappy as to have a place that would make it necessary for me to have a fine coat on a Birthday, I would pin a bank-bill on my sleeve.' He had a place in less than two years, I think—and has had almost every place that every adminis-

tration could bestow. Such were the Patriots that opposed that excellent man, my father, allowed by all parties to have been as incapable of revenge as ever minister was—but whose experience of mankind drew from him that memorable saying, ‘that very few men ought to be Prime Ministers: for it is not fit many should know how bad men are’—one can see a little of it without being a Prime Minister! If one shuns mankind and flies to books, one meets with their meanness and falsehood there too! one has reason to say, there is but one good, that is God.—Adieu! Yours ever,

H. WALPOLE.

1891. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1778.

I SHOULD not for one moment have delayed thanking your Lordship for the honour of your very kind invitation if I had not been absent, and did not receive it till last night, when I returned from Park Place after the post was gone. I had gone thither to keep Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury company on the death of Lord William Campbell¹, and was frightened home by an attack of the gout in my knee, which prevents me, my dear Lord, from daring to name a day for having the great pleasure of waiting on your Lordship and Lady Harcourt. I do hope to execute my wish on Monday next, for the motion of the chaise has removed the pain into my foot, and when it flutters about I have seldom found it to end in a fit; yet vexatious as it would be to lose my visit to Nuneham, it would mortify me still more to trouble your Lordship with my decrepitude, and therefore be assured I will not venture if I am not quite well, and as *Herculean*

LETTER 1891.—¹ Fourth son of fourth Duke of Argyll, and brother of Lady Ailesbury.

as ever. My best friends shall not be troubled with my moans, nor my enemies neither, though the last sooner; and yet I abhor Lady Mary Wortley, who said, 'People wish their enemies dead—but I do not; I say give them the gout, give them the stone!' indeed I would not give them a bodily pang—a little twitch in their minds, that would make them feel for others, would be rather wholesome.

I must not omit my compliments on Colonel Harcourt's marriage², and yet it is not with perfect cordiality. It is not thence I wish for a Lord Nuneham. Pray forgive me; in friendship I am a Tory, and love the right line, though I desire the house of Harcourt may reach to the end of the world, as it has reached from the beginning.

I beg your Lordship's prayers for those that are to travel by land or water, or rather that they may travel, and pray do it as sincerely and fervently as he does for whom your prayers are desired.

Your Lordship's

Most faithful and obedient

Humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P.S. Your Lordship authorizes me and therefore I presume to add the following words to an Israelite indeed:—

TO MR. MASON.

Vide in my writing-box a long letter that will clear me from your accusation; and the reasons why I choose to bring it myself, moreover I have waited time out of mind for Mr. Alderson. I pressed him to come and see my

² Colonel Harcourt married on Sept. 10, 1778, Mary, widow of Thomas Lockhart, and daughter of

Rev. William Danby, of Swinton, Yorkshire.

house, and flattered myself that would be a temptation ; but he is a priest,

And Strawberry must yield to Sion Hill.

As to wanting the conclusion, I do ardently, especially if it is *ad infinitum*. Do you think I can have enough of you, of you *issime*? do you imagine I have no self-love? am I so accustomed to flattery as to be surfeited with it? am I to be praised in every magazine like Garrick and Dr. Johnson; and if not satiated with panegyrics, do I write them on myself, like the former? do I not know that a line of yours will preserve me like a fly in amber? what do you think is come to me? In short, in self-defence I must tell you why I did not send away my letter. I have done such justice on myself in it, on your account, that my modesty would not hold out; and though I shall be rigorously just enough to trust you with my confession, I could not bring myself to stand in a sheet before the clerks of the Post Office, and I am too idle to write a letter over again—so much for that.

I sit feeling and handling and probing myself from hand to foot and putting myself to pain, in trying if the gout is gone. I am just like Harlequin, when he was tickling himself to death. If it does not come before Monday, I shall think myself safe. I was rejoiced to be got home; but when I came up into the blue room, and found Lord Harcourt's letter, I was out of my wits; yet I do not despair, as the journey has shifted the seat of the pain, which I always reckon a good symptom. I have begged the prayers of Lord Harcourt and his congregation, but I will have none of yours: they are not worth a straw. Should we be in such a dismal situation, if you could have prayed us out of it? The English clergy have prayed for Popery and slavery, and drawn down miseries on us, that will not be suspended

for your deprecations, because folly and iniquity are punished by their natural consequences.

My commission to you shall be to lay my homage at Miss Fauquier's feet, which will make it more agreeable. I shall be very happy or very miserable on Monday on all your accounts, as no party could be assembled more to the liking of my heart, but I must not trespass too much in a post-script, for which I again beg Lord Harcourt's pardon. You will oblige me, dear Sir, if you will drop in conversation that Lady Craven has lately allowed me to print *at my press* her translation of the *Somnambule*; and pray observe if no one in the company seems to feel a *soupeçon* of remorse. I shall not tell you why, but I have my reasons.

1892. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 17, 1778.

YOUR last is of August 22nd, and mine was of the 25th. Since then I could have told you of nothing but expectations; nor are they realized yet. Admiral Keppel has been hunting for the Brest fleet, who has either gone southward, or are dodging in and out of their ports: at least he had not found them. But if the god of sea-fights does not smile, the god of merchantmen has wrought miracles: all our fleets are come in from Portugal, the West Indies, and every other mart: he has been as cunning as if he were the demon of smugglers.

Letters are arrived too from New York. D'Estaing had quitted that blockade, and was thought to be sailed to attack Rhode Island. Lord Howe has gone after him with an inferior force, but, they say, hoping to be joined by six of Byron's squadron; which six are come to light again, and were not far off. Of that Admiral not a word. This is the quintessence of all I know.

In my family we are very happy that the King of Prussia has sent the Duke a most handsome excuse, being afraid of exposing a constitution so delicate as his Royal Highness's to the fatigue of a latter campaign ; so *that* anxiety is at an end ! Prince Henry's¹ success has not availed much. Having devoured the country, the Prussians have been forced to step back. The people that have been devoured count for nothing.

Your Duchess of Kingston is a paltry mountebank. It is too ridiculous to have airs after conviction. Mrs. Anne Pitt, I hear, is arrived. Her nephew, Mr. Thomas Pitt, I believe you will see ere long. A weakness is fallen on his knees, and made him a cripple. He is, I think, set out for Italy, like Æneas, with his Creusa², her father of eighty-seven, and two sucking babes. Let me give you a caution : he and I have never been on more than civil terms since Mr. Grenville's reign. He now swears by the ghost of his uncle Chatham, whom in those days he detested.

I saw Mr. Mackenzie last week, who spoke of you with the heartiest kindness ; and so does Lady Betty³. Lady Chesterfield is dead, at about fourscore. She was not a girl when she came over with George I.

What can I tell you more ? My politics, beyond facts, would be but the conjectures of a private dreamer. Yet I am ashamed to send such a sippet of a letter ; especially when you are impatient for mine, and reckon on and depend upon them. But you would not trust to them, if I were not cautious not to send you anything but truths ; no easy task, if I were not brief. Ten thousand lies are propagated every week, not only by both sides, but by

LETTER 1892.—¹ Prince Henry of Prussia, commanding an army under his brother, Frederick the Great, invaded Bohemia in the summer of 1778.

² Thomas Pitt (afterwards Lord

Camelford) married in 1771 Anne, daughter and co-heir of Pinckney Wilkinson, of Burnham, Norfolk.

³ Lady Elizabeth Campbell, third daughter of John, Duke of Argyll. *Walpole*.

stock-jobbers ; for those grave folks, moneyed citizens, contribute exceedingly to embroil and confound History, which was not very authentic before they were spawned. Newspapers, that ought to facilitate intelligence, are the vehicles of lies, and blunders, and scandal ; and Truth, that formerly could trudge ten miles on foot, cannot now get along the road for the crowds of counterfeits. An historian, who shall consult the Gazettes of the times, will write as fabulous a romance as *Gargantua*.

You will wish to know something of Spain's intentions. I am sure I cannot satisfy you. She has a fleet, and she arms ; but her Ambassador⁴ is here—if to blind us, his purpose is not quite answered, for many have no faith in him. On the other hand, though at war with France, neither country takes notice of it. The English pass through Calais as quietly as just after a peace.

The Spanish Ambassador, whose size makes him look as if he represented the King of Lilliput, diverts the town with his gallantries, which are not at all in the style of the novels of his country, nor consist in mere serenades. He made a visit lately to a house of ill odour, and, though they say his wife is jealous, he left his two footmen at the door with flambeaux. His generosity, too, was not of a piece with the masters of Peru. He gave the nymph but half a guinea, and a shilling to the maid. As a pigmy does not pay with his person, the damsels made much noise against the receipt of silver pennies, which might be in proportion to his stature, but were not to his character. To stifle their clamours, he declared he was the Venetian Resident ; and now he has a quarrel on his hands with that minister for the double scandal.

I shall be very glad to see your nephew, though sorry you lose him ; and I am sure I shall find he is more like

⁴ Count Almodovar. *Walpole*.

his father, for having conversed with you. Have you given him a parcel of my letters?

1893. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday evening, Sept. 27, 1778.

I CANNOT let the first evening of my return home pass, my dear Lord, without telling you how happy I was, and am, with the four days I enjoyed at Nuneham. The sensation was more than pleasure, for the reflection is as dear as the reality. To experience so much goodness and friendship from those one most esteems, contents every feeling, and flatters every vanity, nay, would force vanity upon one, were one ever so humble. Pray allow my gratitude to say thus much: shall impudent adulation give what doses it will, shall power swallow them and be ready for more, and shall not I thank your Lordship for honouring me with the select distinction of your friendship, because you have no post to bestow, and I ambition none? It would be hard indeed if sincere professions were to be abolished, because falsehood chooses to profess. When I go to seats of power, or when your Lordship shall blush to receive my homage—from the conscience of not deserving it, why then I shall have no call to offer it, for there will be no room for me at Nuneham.

Were I to fulfil all the duties I contracted this last week, I should write to Lady Harcourt too, but she is too bashful to hear what I would say, and I know will receive it with more pleasure from your Lordship,

Her husband the relator she prefers
Before an angel,

In one word, though not the most beautiful of Lady Harcourt's compositions, not one pleased me so much as her

lines on your Lordship's birthday. They contain such a picture of virtue and felicity, that they deserve a *Spectator* by Mr. Addison; not that he could do justice to them, but having the talent of preaching, and of yet being fashionable, the verses, with his commentary, would have been an immortal memorial of an union that deserves to be an immortal model. These above all I beg to print, that I in my generation may do some good. The poem occasioned by the censures on the Duchess of Kingston is of higher class, and another lecture of morality and good-nature united. I know they will lose in the impression—I mean as I heard them, for after Lady Harcourt had conquered her timidity and amiable modesty, I never heard any lady read so well. In short, my Lord, you will not deserve such a wife, if once in your life you do not command. No man has a right to marry a muse and engross her. You must order her to appoint me her printer, nor will I be Harcourt Pursuivant if I am not their typographer too, but I have not said a word of my gratitude to Lady Harcourt; yes, I hope all this page has breathed it. To suppress a vast deal is the best proof of the rest.

I cannot quit such a society without begging a thousand compliments to Miss Fauquier, who merits such friends, and who does as much honour to their choice as they do to her. But in truth, I am come back in such raptures, that I doubt whether I am not rather drunk with self-love, than an enthusiast to the virtues and good sense resident at Nuneham. Well! we shall see. When you are all three given up for fools, &c., &c., &c., I will allow that I was an old idiot to be so blind. Till then, allow me to be passionately (a fig for high regard and perfect esteem) your Lordship's and Lady Harcourt's, ay, and Miss Fauquier's

Most devoted,

HOR. WALPOLE.

Mem. The letter to myself when I shall be fifty is not finished. Till that is perfect, Lady Harcourt will not be.

1894. TO THE EARL OF ORFORD.

MY DEAR LORD,

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 5, 1778.

Your Lordship is very good in thanking me for what I could not claim any thanks, as in complying with your request, and assisting you to settle your affairs, according to my father's will, was not only my duty, but to promote your service and benefit, to re-establish the affairs of my family, and to conform myself to the views of the excellent man, the glory of human nature, who made us all what we are, has been constantly one of the principal objects of my whole life. If my labours and wishes have been crowned with small success, it has been owing to my own inability in the first place, and next to tenderness, and to the dirt and roguery of wretches below my notice. For your Lordship, I may presume to say, I have spared no thought, industry, solicitude, application, or even health, when I had the care of your affairs. What I did, and could have done, and should have done, if you had not thought fit to prefer a most conceited and worthless fellow, I can demonstrate by reams of paper, that may, one day or other, prove what I say; and which, if I have not yet done, it proceeds from the same tenderness that I have ever had for your Lordship's tranquillity and repose. To acquiesce afterwards in the arrangement you have proposed to me, is small merit indeed. My honour is much dearer to me than fortune, and to contribute to your Lordship's enjoying your fortune with credit and satisfaction, is a point I would have purchased with far greater compliances; for, my Lord, as I flatter myself that I am not thought an interested

man, so all who know me know, that to see the lustre of my family restored to the consideration to which it was raised by Sir Robert Walpole, shining in you, and transmitted to his and your descendants, was the only ambition that ever actuated me. No personal advantage entered into those views; and if I say thus much of myself with truth, I owe still greater justice to my brother, who has many more virtues than I can pretend to, and is as incapable of forming any mean and selfish wishes as any man upon earth. We are both old men now, and without sons to inspire us with future visions. We wish to leave your Lordship in as happy and respectable situation as you were born to, and we have both given you all the proof in our power, by acquiescing in your proposal immediately.

For me, my Lord, I should with pleasure accept the honour of waiting on you at Houghton at the time you mention, if my lameness and threats of the gout did not forbid my taking so long a journey at this time of the year. At sixty-one, it would not become me to talk of another year: perhaps I may never go to Houghton again, till I go thither for ever; but without affectation of philosophy, even the path to that journey will be sweetened to me, if I leave Houghton the flourishing monument of one of the best ministers that ever blest this once flourishing country.

I am, my dear Lord,

Yours most affectionately,

HOR. WALPOLE¹.

LETTER 1894.—¹ Written in reply to the following (both letters first printed by C.):—

‘Eriswell, Oct. 1, 1778.

‘SIR,

‘I write one line to thank you for your ready concurrence in the

measures I am now pursuing to settle the affairs of the family, and to satisfy Sir Robert Walpole's creditors; and beg leave to trouble you to make my compliments, and to return my thanks also to Sir Edward.

‘If you have a mind to revisit

1895. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 8, 1778.

As you are so earnest for news, I am concerned when I have not a paragraph to send you. It looks as if distance augmented your apprehensions; for, I assure you, at home we have lost almost all curiosity. Though the two fleets have been so long at sea, and though, before their last *sortie*, one heard nothing but ‘What news of the fleets?’ of late there has been scarce any inquiry; and so the French one is returned to Brest, and ours is coming home. Admiral Keppel is very unlucky in having missed them, for they had not above twenty-five ships. Letters from Paris say their camps, too, are to break up at the end of this month: but we do not intend to be the dupes of that *finesse*, if it is one, but shall remain on our guard. One must hope that winter will produce some negotiation; and that, peace. Indeed, as war is not declared, I conclude there is always some treating on the anvil; and, should it end well, at least this age will have made a step towards humanity, in omitting the ceremonial of proclamation, which seems to make it easier to cease being at war. But I am rather making out a proxy for a letter than sending you news. But, you see, even armies of hundred thousands in Germany can execute as little as we; and you must remember what the Grand Condé, or the great Prince of Orange,—I forget which,—said, that unmarried girls imagine husbands are always doing duty, unmilitary men that soldiers are always fight-

your Penates again, and to see the alterations I am making in both fronts (I will not call them improvements), I shall be extremely glad to have your company at Houghton, on Monday fortnight, the 19th of

October, where I purpose staying a week.

‘I am, Sir, with great regard,
 ‘Your most obedient and
 ‘Humble servant,
 ‘ORFORD.’

ing. One of the Duke of Marlborough's generals dining with the Lord Mayor, an alderman that sat next to him said, 'Sir, yours must be a very laborious profession.'—'No,' replied the general, 'we fight about four hours in the morning, and two or three after dinner, and then we have all the rest of the day to ourselves.'

The King has been visiting camps,—and so has Sir William Howe, who, one should think, had had enough of them; and who, one should think too, had not achieved such exploits as should make him fond of parading himself about, or expect many hosannahs. To have taken one town, and retreated from two, is not very glorious in military arithmetic; and to have marched twice to Washington, and returned without attacking him, is no addition to the sum total.

Did I tell you that Mrs. Anne Pitt is returned, and acts great grief for her brother? I suppose she was the dupe of the farce acted by the two Houses and the court, and had not heard that none of them carried on the pantomime even to his burial. Her nephew¹ gave a little into that mummery even to me; forgetting how much I must remember of his aversion to his uncle. Lord Chatham was a meteor, and a glorious one; people discovered that he was not a genuine luminary, and yet everybody in mimicry has been an *ignis fatuus* about him. Why not allow his magnificent enterprises and good fortune, and confess his defects; instead of being bombast in his praises, and at the same time discover that the amplification is insincere? A minister that inspires great actions must be a great minister; and Lord Chatham will always appear so,—by comparison with his predecessors and successors. He retrieved our affairs when ruined by a most incapable administration; and we are fallen into a worse state since he was removed. Therefore, I doubt,

LETTER 1895.—¹ Mr. Thomas Pitt. *Walpole*.

posterity will allow more to his merit, than it is the present fashion to accord to it. Our historians have of late been fond of decrying Queen Elizabeth, in order if possible to raise the Stuarts: but great actions surmount foibles; and folly and guilt would always remain folly and guilt, though there had never been a great man or woman in the world. Our modern tragedies, hundreds of them do not contain a good line; nor are they a jot the better, because Shakespeare, who was superior to all mankind, wrote some whole plays that are as bad as any of our present writers.

I shall be very glad to see your nephew, and talk of you with him; which will be more satisfactory than questioning accidental travellers.

This letter will prove to you that I am attentive to your anxiety as well as to your information; but pray, let it remind you, when you do not hear from me, that I have nothing material to tell you. It is idle to send three pages of trifling so far!

1896. TO EARL HARCOURT.

Arlington Street, Oct. 9, 1778.

THOUGH I received so very kind a letter from your Lordship this morning, I should have been too modest to answer it, if Lady Laura¹ had not told me last night of Lady Harcourt's obliging commands to her to make me escort her. I should gladly obey that and your Lordship's friendly hint, were it in my power; but I am come to town this morning on disagreeable business with my brother, which will cost me some hundreds of pounds, a clerk in our joint office having chosen to dispose of some money entrusted to him *à la Maccaroni*; and it will tax my time for some days, as well as my purse. But you shall hear no more of it, for

LETTER 1896.—¹ Lady Laura Waldegrave.

I do not take the loss of money enough to heart to draw on my friends for their pity. If I could wait on you at Nuneham, you would not find I have much occasion for consolation.

You do not think, I trust, my dear Lord, that I took the opportunity of your asking for my fourth volume, to thrust another old thing upon you. Lady Harcourt ordered me to send her the tragedy, and I suppose I forgot to say so. All I have to say of the play is, that Mr. Mason could write a much better, if he would. I can prove what I say, for with the alteration of a few words, and with the addition of a few lines, he made my tragedy fit for the stage, if the rest of it is so. It was one of the most masterly feats ever performed, but I need not do *him* justice to your Lordship. I only mention it that you may not hesitate to set him to work on any little corrections that Lady Harcourt's poems may want, the faults of which are evidence of the facility with which she writes. Your Lordship is so tender of her honour, that I see you promote her bashfulness instead of giving her courage; but I hope Mr. Mason's judgement will encourage you both; he is no flatterer, I will swear, and when you have the imprimatur of Apollo's own licenser of the press, shall I not flatter myself that my office of printer to Nuneham will no longer be a sinecure?

Lady Laura will give your Lordship an account of a fête I gave her and my other nieces last night. Strawberry really looked very pretty, though neither the prospect nor the painted glass had their share; but forgive me if I say that my nieces supplied these deficiencies. Lady Laura I doubt will miss the prospect still less when she comes from Nuneham. The Duchess is charmed with your Lordship's and Lady Harcourt's goodness to her daughters, which you find I was eager to trumpet, for after the very agreeable days I passed at Nuneham myself, it was natural to wish that my niece should be as happy; so your Lordship should

be upon your guard, and not to be too indulgent to me, since I cannot help on all occasions being

Your most grateful and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1897. TO EARL HARCOURT.

I TRUST I need not say how happy and honoured I am whenever your Lordship is so good as to give me any commands. I must then be as unhappy when I cannot obey them immediately. I have kept your servant while I hunted for the *treillage* paper, but I cannot find it. I flatter myself I carried it to Strawberry, whither I go to-morrow and shall search for it—but I fear! It had laid here in an empty room two years. I have an imperfect notion of having lent a bit or the whole piece to somebody, whom I cannot recollect certainly, but think it was Lady Aylesbury, whom I will ask about it. In short, your Lordship may depend upon my recovering it if possible. I only know it was ill done, for the roses were not interlaced among the *bâtons*, but seemed tacked against them, which had I had it executed here, I intended should be corrected; however, I shall be exceedingly vexed if I do not find the original.

Your Lordship's most devoted,

H. WALPOLE.

1898. TO EARL HARCOURT.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have hunted in vain at Strawberry for the *treillage* paper, and cannot find it; I must have lent it to somebody that has forgotten it as well as I. I am vexed, though I hope the bower will not suffer by it, and that it will give jealousy to Queen Eleanor still, or to King Eleanor.

1899. TO THE REV. WILLIAM MASON.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 11, 1778.

A THOUSAND thanks for the trouble you have given yourself, and the information¹ you have sent me; it fully satisfies me, at least till my next visit to Nuneham. I own there is an idea in the play you describe, which, had it come into my hand, I should certainly have adopted;—the mother's intention of meeting her own husband and not her son. However as you have, by a *coup de baguette*, obviated the shocking part, I trouble myself no farther. I never had any difficulty of adopting your corrections, but because my original view was to paint the height of repentance for real guilt; whereas any palliative admits a degree of weakness in the Countess, and makes her rather superstitious or delicate, than penitent upon reason. But however, as I am tired of the subject, I will not tire you upon it. If ever the play is acted, it must be with your improvements, which I will print with it. So I will whether it is acted or not; for such marks of your genius should not be lost, though you want not other proofs; and it will please me to have furnished you with the materials. I grow tired to death of my own things, and hate to talk of them.

Lady Laura, who carries this, will tell you how many accidents prevent my obeying Lord and Lady Harcourt, and accompanying her. I have lost near 700*l.* by a clerk, and I am on Tuesday to sign a family compact with my nephew, by which, some time or other, I shall get the fortune my father left me, which I never expected; so the balance of events is in my favour, and then the deuce is in it if I am to be pitied.

LETTER 1899.—¹ Mason had mentioned an old play with a plot re-

sembling that of Horace Walpole's tragedy, *The Mysterious Mother*.

Lady Laura will describe to you a most brilliant fête that I gave her and her sisters and cousins last Thursday. People may say what they will, but splendid as it was, I am not of opinion that this *festival of nieces* was absolutely the most charming show that ever was seen. I believe the entertainment given by the Queen of the Amazons to the King of Mauritania in the Castle of Ice, and the ball made for the Princess of Persia by the Duke of Sparta in the Saloon of Roses, were both of them more delightful, especially as the contrast of the sable Africans with the shining whiteness of the Thracian heroines, and the opposition between the nudity of the Lacedæmonian generals and the innumerable folds of linen in the drapery of the Persian ladies, must have been more singular than all the marvels in the Castle of Strawberry last Thursday. To be sure, the illumination of the gallery surpassed the Palace of the Sun; and when its fretted ceiling, which you know is richer than the roof of Paradise, opened for the descent of Mrs. Clive in the full moon, nothing could be more striking. The circular drawing-room was worthy of the presence of Queen Bess, as many of the old ladies, who remember her, affirmed; and the high altar in the tribune was fitter for a Protestant king's hearing mass than the chapel at Lord Petre's. The tapestry bed in the great chamber looked gorgeous (though it had not an escutcheon of pretence like the Duchess of Chandos's while her father and brother are living) and was ready strewed with roses for a hymeneal; but alas! there was the misfortune of the solemnity!

Though my nieces looked as well as the Houris, notwithstanding I was disappointed of the house of North to set them off, and though I had sent out one hundred and thirty cards, in this region there are no swains who are under my own almost climacteric. I had three Jews of Abraham's standing, and seven Sarahs who still talk of the second

Temple. The rest of the company were dowagers and maidens, with silver beards down to their girdles; Henry and Frances, whose doves have long done laying; the curate of the parish; Briscoe, the second-hand silversmith; and Lady Greenwich in a riding-dress, for she came on her own broom. You may perhaps think that some of the company were not quite of dignity adequate to such a high festival, but they were just the persons made the most happy by being invited: and as the haughtiest peers stoop to be civil to shopkeepers before an election, I did not see why I should not do, out of good nature, what the proudest so often do out of interest. I do not mention two ancient generals, because they have not been beaten out of America into red ribands; nor a Judge Perryn², who had solicited me to invite his daughters, and brought them on my sending a very civil card, and yet did not so much as write an answer or thank me—but I really believe it was from mere stupidity. If I could grudge your staying at Nuneham, I should regret your not being here in such noble weather. Come, however, as soon as you can and stay as long.

By the rise of the stocks, and the wonderful hide-and-seek of the fleets, I suspect some treaty is brewing: it cannot be so scandalous but it will go down; and therefore it cannot be worse than the nation deserves. If anything prevents it, it will be the declaration of the Spanish Ambassador, that King Carlos will never acknowledge the independence of America till King George does, which I suppose the latter will not do, if even the King of Monomatapa or the King of Mechlenberg will encourage him to go on. Besides it is a heavenly sight to see soldiers, and not see an enemy! and a more heavenly sight to see a puppet-show, and to lock up one's son³, who is of an age to enjoy one!—

² Sir Richard Perryn, Knight (1723–1803), Baron of the Exchequer.

³ The Prince of Wales.

and yet what command of one's passions to put off a review for a christening!—what pity gazettes-extraordinary were not in fashion, when two shillings were issued out of the Exchequer to Jack of Reading, for getting on the table and making the Kingsport. This was in the reign of Edward II, and is only recorded in a *computus* still extant. Adieu.

1900. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Oct. 14, 1778.

I THINK you take in no newspapers, nor I believe condescend to read any more modern than the *Paris à la Main* at the time of the *Ligue*—consequently you have not seen a new scandal on my father, which you will not wonder offends me. You cannot be interested in his defence; but, as it comprehends some very curious anecdotes, you will not grudge my indulging myself to a friend in vindicating a name so dear to me.

In the accounts of Lady Chesterfield's death and fortune, it is said that the late King, at the instigation of Sir R. W., burnt his father's will, which contained a large legacy to that, his supposed, daughter, and, I believe, his real one: for she was very like him; as her brother, General Schu-lembourg, is, in black, to the late King. The fact of suppressing the will is indubitably true; the instigator most false, as I can demonstrate thus.

When the news arrived of the death of George the First, my father carried the account from Lord Townshend to the then Prince of Wales. One of the first acts of royalty is for the new monarch to make a speech to the Privy Council. Sir Robert asked the King who he would please to have draw the Speech, which was, in fact, asking who was to be Prime Minister. His Majesty replied, Sir Spencer Compton. It is a wonderful anecdote, and little known,

that the new Premier, a very dull man, could not draw the Speech, and the person to whom he applied was—the deposed Premier. The Queen, who favoured my father, observed how unfit a man was for successor, who was reduced to beg assistance of his predecessor. The Council met as soon as possible, the next morning at latest. There Archbishop Wake, with whom one copy of the will had been deposited (as another was, I think, with the Duke of Wolfenbüttele¹, who had a pension for sacrificing it, which, *I know*, the late Duke of Newcastle transacted), advanced, and delivered the will to the King, who put it into his pocket, and went out of Council without opening it, the Archbishop not having courage or presence of mind to desire it to be read, as he ought to have done.

These circumstances, which I solemnly assure you are strictly true, prove that my father neither advised, nor was consulted; nor is it credible that the King in one night's time should have passed from the intention of disgracing him, to make him his bosom confidant on so delicate an affair.

I was once talking to the late Lady Suffolk, the former mistress, on that extraordinary event. She said, 'I cannot justify the deed to the legatees, but towards his father the late King was justifiable: for George the First had burnt two wills made in favour of George the Second.' I suppose they were the testaments of the Duke and Duchess of Zell², parents of George the First's wife, whose treatment of her they always resented.

I said, *I know* the transactions of the D. of N.³ The late Lord Waldegrave showed me a letter from that Duke to the first Earl of Waldegrave, then Ambassador at Paris, with directions about that transaction, or, at least, about payment

LETTER 1900.—¹ Augustus William, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttele; d. 1731.

² George William, Duke of Lüne-

burg-Celle; his wife was a Frenchwoman, Eléonore, daughter of Alexandre d'Olbreuse.

³ The Duke of Newcastle.

of the pension, I forget which. I have somewhere, but cannot turn to it now, a memorandum of that affair, and who the Prince was, whom I may mistake in calling Duke of Wolfenbottle. There was a third copy of the will, I likewise forget with whom deposited. The newspaper says, which is true, that Lord Chesterfield filed a bill in Chancery against the late King, to oblige him to produce the will, and was silenced, I think, by payment of 20,000*l*. There was another legacy to his own daughter, the Queen of Prussia, which has at times been, and, I believe, is still claimed by the King of Prussia.

Do not mention any part of this story, but it is worth preserving, as I am sure you are satisfied with my scrupulous veracity. It may perhaps be authenticated hereafter by collateral evidence that may come out. If ever true history does come to light, my father's character will have just honour paid to it. Lord Chesterfield, one of his sharpest enemies, has not, with all his prejudices, left a very unfavourable account of him, and it would alone be raised by comparison of their two characters. Think of one who calls Sir Robert the corrupter of youth, leaving a system of education to poison them from their nursery! Chesterfield, Pulteney, and Bolinbroke were the saints that reviled my father!

I beg your pardon, but you allow me to open my heart to you when it is full. Yours ever,

H. W.

1901. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Oct. 23, 1778.

. HAVING thus told you all I know, I shall add a few words, to say I conclude you have known as much, by my not having heard from you. Should the Post Office

or Secretary's Office set their wits at work to bring to light all the intelligence contained under the above hiatus, I am confident they will discover nothing, though it gives an exact description of all they have been about themselves.

My personal history is very short. I have had an assembly and the rheumatism—and am buying a house—and it rains—and I shall plant the roses against my *treillage* to-morrow. Thus you know what I have done, suffered, am doing, and shall do. Let me know as much of you, in quantity, not in quality. Introductions to, and conclusions of, letters are as much out of fashion, as *to*, *at*, &c., on letters. This sublime age reduces everything to its quintessence: all periphrases and expletives are so much in disuse, that I suppose soon the only way of making love will be to say 'Lie down.' Luckily, the lawyers will not part with any synonymous words, and will, consequently, preserve the redundancies of our language,—*Dixi*.

1902. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Oct. 26, 1778.

MR. KERRICH¹ shall have a ticket, dear Sir, to see Strawberry whenever he wishes for it next spring.

I have finished the Life of Mr. Baker, will have it transcribed, and send it to you. I have omitted several little particulars that are in your notes, for two reasons: one, because so much is said in the *Biographia*; and the other, because I have rather drawn a character of him, than meant a circumstantial life. In the justice I have done to him, I trust I shall have pleased you. I have much greater doubt of that effect in what I have said of his principles and party. It is odd, perhaps, to have made

LETTER 1902. — ¹ Rev. Thomas Kerrich (1748-1828), Fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge, an anti-

quary and artist. He was elected Librarian of the University of Cambridge in 1797.

use of the life of a High Churchman for expatiating on my own very opposite principles, but it gave me so fair an opportunity of discussing those points, that I very naturally embraced it. I have done due honour to his immaculate conscience, but have not spared the cause in which he fell, or rather rose, for the ruin of his fortune was the triumph of his virtue.

As you know I do not love the press, you may be sure I have no thoughts of printing this Life at present; nay, I beg you will not only not communicate it, but take care it never should be printed without my consent. I have written what presented itself; I should perhaps choose to soften several passages; and I trust it to you for your own satisfaction, not as a finished thing, or as I am determined it should remain.

Another favour I beg of you, is to criticize it as largely and severely as you please. You have a right so to do, as it is built with your own materials; nay, you have a right to scold if I have, nay, since I have, employed them so differently from your intention. All my excuse is, that you communicated them to one who did not deceive you, and who, you was pretty sure, would make nearly the use of them that he has made. Was not you? did not you suspect a little that I could not even write a Life of Mr. Baker without talking Whiggism!—well, if I have ill-treated the cause, I am sure I have exalted the martyr. I have thrown new light on his virtue from his notes on the *Gazettes*, and you will admire him more, though you may love me less, for my chymistry. I should be truly sorry if I did lose a scruple of your friendship. You have ever been as candid to me as Mr. Baker was to his antagonists, and our friendship is another proof that men of the most opposite principles can agree in everything else, and not quarrel about them.

As my MS. contains above twenty pages of my writing on larger paper than this, you cannot receive it speedily—however, I have performed my promise, and I hope you will not be totally discontent, though I am not satisfied with myself. I have executed it by snatches and with long interruptions; and not having been eager about it, I find I wanted that ardour to inspire me; another proof of what I told you, that my small talent is waning, and wants provocatives. It shall be a warning to me. Adieu!

P.S. I have long had a cast of one part of the great seal of Queen Henrietta, that you mention, as you may find in the Catalogue of Strawberry, in the green closet. It is her figure under a canopy.

1903. TO THE HON. THOMAS WALPOLE.

DEAR SIR,

Arlington Street, Oct. 26, 1778.

On coming to town to-day I found a most magnificent and beautiful book¹, and a letter as generous and beautiful. I am ashamed to accept the one, and cannot pretend to answer the other, and when I cannot contend with you in generosity, I am sure I will not in words. Still, I am sorry to deprive you of so fine and rare a book, nor can possess it without regret at your expense. All I can do is to give you a thousand thanks; and I owe you still more for your son's² visit, which gave me the greatest pleasure. He is so sensible, modest, and natural that I wish Strawberry Hill could have more attractions for him. I shall be

LETTER 1903. — Not in C.; reprinted from *Some Unpublished Letters of Horace Walpole*, edited by Sir Spencer Walpole, pp. 12-13.

¹ Apparently a book on shells, published in Denmark. This book is mentioned in the letter to Thomas

Walpole the younger of June 26, 1792.

² The younger Thomas Walpole (1755-1840), subsequently a correspondent of Horace Walpole. He was Envoy at Munich (at the court of the Elector Palatine) 1783-88.

in town till Thursday, if you should come this way. I would call on you rather, but must wait here for people of business, being come on the purchase of a house³: but I long to thank you in person for all your favours to

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1904. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Oct. 30, 1778.

PRAY allow that I am a miracle of attention, when I have the courage to begin a letter that is, I know, to contain little or nothing, and which is the quintessence of two very long *Gazettes*. We had been amused with a notion that Lord Howe was blocking up M. D'Estaing in Boston, and would certainly take him and his whole fleet. Lest we should build too much on that idea, Lord Howe himself arrived on Monday, having taken nothing—but his leave. Being modest, he owns that he had no mind to encounter the French squadron. A violent storm solved his difficulties, and dispersed both fleets. The Americans, deprived of their allies, quitted Rhode Island; and then Sir Harry Clinton raised a contribution of ten thousand sheep and some oxen, which intimates a little want of provisions. However, these escapes have raised our spirits so much, that we are going to send twelve thousand men more to America, where they may banquet on mutton. Still, as it is good to have two strings to our bow, though Governor Johnstone is returned, the other two Commissioners remain to make peace, to which we are told the Americans are disposed; a proof of which is our sending another army thither.

³ No. 11 Berkeley Square. The deed of assignment, dated March 25,

1780, is in the hands of Mr. Vernon Watney, the owner of the house.

Admiral Keppel is returned to Portsmouth, and the Brest squadron is again at sea ; taking it by turns to take an airing.

One advantage we certainly have, having taken to the value of two millions in prizes ; on the strength of which we shall fling away above double that sum. But we never proposed to be gainers by the war : we had nothing to do, and so we played against ourselves.

The Duke of Queensberry is dead, at fourscore ; and leaves a great estate to Lord March, the new Duke. There is a much more melancholy loss, the death of Lord Lincoln. He was sent abroad at the last gasp, and died two posts from Calais. You know he married one of my cousins, a daughter of Lord Hertford. She is a very pretty, sensible, amiable young woman, and passionately fond of him. She returned last night with the body.

I came to town on Monday for a day or two, and have been caught by the gout in my foot ; but it is very slight, and with very little pain, so that I hope it will be of short duration. It is amazing what the bootikins have done for me by diminishing the mass of gout. I have had no fit for near two years, and the three last were very inconsiderable. As I have worn the bootikins constantly every night ever since my great fit, it is demonstration how serviceable they are to me at least.

Mrs. Anne Pitt, I hear, is in a very wild way, and they think must be confined. She is not the only one I know that ought to be,—but I hold my peace. Indeed, in this country it would be partiality to shut up only one or two here and there.

I make no excuse for being so short. I am tired of lamenting ; and still live, I doubt, to see the completion of all the ruin I have foreseen,—and then one has lived too long !

1905. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, Nov. 4, 1778.

You will see by my secretary's hand that I am not able to write myself, indeed, I am in bed with the gout in six places, like Daniel in the den, but as the lions are slumbering round me, and leave me a moment of respite, I employ it to give you one. You have misunderstood me, dear Sir. I have not said a word that will lower Mr. Baker's character; on the contrary, I think he will come out brighter from my ordeal. In truth, as I have drawn out his life from your papers, it is a kind of political epic, in which his conscience is the hero that always triumphs over his interest upon the most opposite occasions. Shall you dislike your saint in this light?

I had transcribed about half when I fell ill last week. If the gout does not seize my right hand, I shall probably have full leisure to finish it during my recovery, but shall certainly not be able to send it to you by Mr. Lort.

Your promise fully satisfies me. My life can never extend to twenty years. Any one that saw me this moment would not take me for a Methuselem. I have not strength to dictate more now, except to add, that if Mr. Nickolls has seen my narrative about Chatterton, it can only be my letter to Mr. Beverley¹, of which you have a copy: the larger one has not yet been out of my own house. I am, dear Sir, yours most sincerely,

H. W.

P.S. I forgot to say, that you shall certainly have every scrap of your MSS. carefully returned to you; and you will

LETTER 1905. — ¹ Printed 'Barrett' by C. Perhaps John Beverley

(1743-1828), Esquire Bedell of Cambridge University.

find that I have barely sipped here and there, and exhausted nothing.

1906. TO LADY BROWNE.

Arlington Street, Nov. 5, 1778.

YOUR Ladyship is exceedingly kind and charitable, and the least I can do in return is to do all I can—dictate a letter to you. I have not been out of bed longer than it was necessary to have it made, once a day, since last Thursday. The gout is in both my feet, both my knees, and in my left hand and elbow. Had I a mind to brag, I could boast of a little rheumatism too, but I scorn to set value on such a trifle; nay, I will own that I have felt little acute pain. My chief propensity to exaggeration would be on the miserable nights I have passed; and yet whatever I should say would not be beyond what I thought I suffered. I have been constantly as broad awake as any Mrs. Candour that is always gaping for scandal, except when I have taken opiates, and then my dreams have been as extravagant as all Mrs. Candour adds to what she hears. In short, Madam, not to tire you with more details, though you have ordered them, I am so weak that I am able to see nobody at all, and when I shall be recovered enough to take possession of this new lease, as it is called, the mansion, I believe, will be so shattered that it won't be worth repairs. Is it not very foolish, then, to be literally buying a new house? Is it not verifying Pope's line, when I choose a pretty situation

But just to look about us, and to die?

I am sorry Lady Jane's lot is fallen in Westphalia, where so great a hog is lord of the manor. He is like the dragon of Wantley,

And houses and churches
To him are geese and turkeys ;

so I don't wonder that he has gobbled her two cows.

Lady Blandford is delightful in congratulating me upon having the gout in town, and staying in the country herself. Nay, she is very insolent in presuming to be the only person invulnerable. If I could wish her any harm, it should be that she might feel for one quarter of an hour a taste of the mortifications that I suffered from eleven last night till four this morning, and I am sure she would never dare to have a spark of courage again. I can only wish her in Grosvenor Square, where she would run no risks. Her reputation for obstinacy is so well established, that she might take advice from her true friends for a twelvemonth, before we should believe her own ears. However, as everybody has some weak part, I know she will do for others more than for herself ; and therefore, pray, Madam, tell her, that I am sure it is bad for your Ladyship to stay in the country at this time of year, and that reason I am sure will bring you both. I really must rest.

1907. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Nov. 16, 1778.

I THINK I luckily wrote to you just as I was seized with the gout, and told you so. I am sure I have not been able to write since, for I am confined to my bed ; and have been above this fortnight with the gout in every hand, elbow, knee, and foot belonging to me, and not one of the eight is yet recovered. This is so terrible a state to suffer, and so tiresome to hear for anybody else, that I shall say as little upon it as possible. There is no danger in it : in every other light it is deplorable.

This confinement has cost you no news but the loss of

Dominica¹; and you saw as much of that in the newspaper, at least, as I could tell you. I have this moment received yours of the 27th of last month, in which you again petition for good news, that you may silence the impertinent buzzes in your part of the world; but in truth I don't know how you will stop their throats, but by the quantity and richness of the captures made from the French. The King's Speech, I doubt, must have great recourse to the same anodyne. Nothing of consequence has been done anywhere, by fleets or armies; and the notion is, that our own returned commanders are likely to be warmer with one another, than they have been with the enemy: but, indeed, I believe reports of what is to come still less than what is past, neither of which have I for some time seen come to anything:—then it is not difficult to foresee the consequence.

I am surprised at the Hibernian family² you mention being arrived at Florence so soon: you are very welcome to show them as many civilities as you please, and set them down to my account; but do not receive everything they say of me as coming from the heart. They know your partiality to me, and they mean to pass their time everywhere as agreeably as they can. For the other lady³, and her daughter Chance, be doubly upon your guard against the mother. There is nothing so black of which she is not capable. Her gallantries are the whitest specks about her.

I have heard nothing of your nephew's arrival; but shall be very impatient when he does come to see him, as soon

LETTER 1907. —¹ Dominica surrendered to the French, under the Marquis de Bouillé, in September 1778.

² Lord and Lady Lucan and their daughters, who were in Florence at this time.

³ Elizabeth Drax, Countess-Dow-

ager of Berkeley, afterwards married to Robert Nugent, Esq., since created Earl of Clare. During her latter marriage she had two daughters, the younger of whom Mr. Nugent disavowed for his. The elder was married to the second Earl Temple. *Walpole.*

as I can see anybody. I shall long to hear his accounts of you, and good accounts of you; at least, I shall not hear that you are little more than a mummy, as I am. Adieu!

1908. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Nov. 27, 1778.

IN my present situation, lying on a couch in my bed-chamber, with not a single limb free but my left hand, I certainly did not expect any singular pleasure to-day; and yet I had the very great and unexpected one of seeing your nephew, who, though another, is a true Sir Horace. He had called here a few days ago, when I was able to see scarce anybody; and, not being expected, he was not admitted. I was heartily chagrined, and did not know whither to send to him. He was so kind as to come again to-day, when you may be sure he was not refused. As I can only dictate, I must retrench a thousand things I would say; but one word will paint my contentment with him. He loves you as much as he would have loved his father, if he had known him as well. Indeed, it is the same thing: as I told him, there were two you's or two he's. Your nephew says he would not but visit you every year for the world, which you may be sure I did not discourage; though I must naturally wish just the reverse, i. e. that you should visit him, at least for once. He tells me you are very plump and portly, and in most admirable health. Poor young man! he had a little gout in one foot, and I presented but a sad perspective to him. But I begged him not to bring the gout into his stomach, by being persuaded to keep it out by strong wines. Though I have been so often afflicted with severe fits for these twenty years, I never had it but one half-hour in my head, and never once in my stomach. In this fit, though I kept

my bed within three days of a month, perspired immoderately and almost constantly, yet I drank nothing but cold water the whole time; and every morning as soon as I wake, have my face and neck washed with cold water. No fit ever came so rapidly and regularly, nor went off more kindly—thanks to the bootikins, and to cold water and air; which two last, I am persuaded by long experience, will never hurt *me*, though very likely my system would kill a Hercules, who all his life had kept up a fiery furnace in his stomach. For your nephew, he seems to have acquired the only thing he wanted, and which was very excusable to want at his age,—prudence. And he feels it still more on your account than his own.

I beg the nation's, but not your pardon, for indulging myself in giving the precedence to your nephew.—Now for the other.

Our Parliament opened yesterday. The Speech did not display very promising prospects, but the debates and events in neither House were remarkable: prodigious bickerings were expected between the generals, admirals, commissioners, and ministers; but some of the points in contestation were alone touched, and nothing probed, though probably only deferred.

It is said and believed, that Sir Harry Clinton had embarked a body of troops for our West Indian islands, but has disembarked them again; so the merchants concerned in those islands are in the highest alarms. Spain, I doubt, grows less and less to be depended upon; and the French party in Holland have carried some strong questions against our seizure of their ships, though we have offered reasonable indemnification. In short, I have neither good news nor good prognostics to send you. All these things are public; and secrets I should not utter even to you at this distance, if I knew any.

You shall hear again as soon as I am able to write, or sooner if there is anything material to send you. Your nephew will help me out; though in the hurry of a fresh arrival, and with his attendance on Parliament, you cannot justly expect him to be very punctual at first, till he is got *en train*: however, I am sure his heart will not let him be remiss. Adieu!

1909. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Dec. 18, 1778.

HAVING so many lonely vacant hours (if pain leaves vacancy), I should seem unpardonable in having left such a chasm in our correspondence, when I know you extremely impatient for news. Solitary hours, to be sure, I have had innumerable, even in my best intervals; for fashion has pushed the day so far into the night, that I have been forced to conform my sick regularity a little to the watches of the town, and dine later than I choose, or dine in public: for nobody will make me a morning's visit before two in the afternoon, nor leave me to go home to dress for dinner before four. They come not again till eight or nine at night, when they would keep me out of bed till twelve, if I would let them.

But I have had more grievous reasons for not writing; though free from pain for this week, I have not yet at all recovered the use of my right hand. But I have had a more serious and more dangerous complaint, and the consequence of my gout; such a weakness in my breast, that an inflammation on it was apprehended, and I was absolutely forbidden to see company, or even speak, which I must do to dictate. This codicil to my gout, I confess, was owing to this my second childhood; in short, my spirits ran away with me, and I talked without ceasing.

Even a child is cunning enough to make excuses: mine was, that I could have gone about the town for three days without speaking three words, for I might not have met with three persons to whom I wished to speak; but in my own room, where I see nobody but those I choose to see, and many friends whom I had not seen for six months, one must have the continent tongue of Lord Abercorn¹ in the breeches of Scipio to be silent. Well! I am recovered of that danger, and am recovering of all the rest; and you shall now hear no more of me, who am not politics, which are what you want to know.

Of them I know not what to write. The Parliament is unshaken, though it has had rough concussions. The rash proclamation² in America alarmed much, and I fear will have bitter consequences: but all is swallowed up by the new court martial on Admiral Keppel; as rash an act in its kind, and the deed, it is said, of that black man Sir Hugh Palliser alone³. Its consequences may be many, various, and fatal; but I neither love to foresee, nor to spread misfortunes of my country, when my letter must pass through the ordeal of as many hostile post-houses as formerly gallant ladies passed over burning plough-shares,—let us talk rather of gallant ladies—but no, I hate scandal; and, besides, our greatest dames are no longer gallant, but errant street-walkers, and I have never promised to send you the register of Doctors' Commons: our news-writers are the proper secretaries of that tribunal, and with all their infamous propensity to lying can scarce outstrip the truth.

What I have long apprehended is on the point of conclusion, the sale of the pictures at Houghton. The mad

LETTER 1909.—¹ James Hamilton, eighth Earl of Abercorn, remarkable for his taciturnity. *Walpole*.

² A threatening proclamation of General Clinton, who had been provoked by the non-performance of

the Convention concluded at Saratoga.

³ Palliser applied for a court martial on Keppel for misconduct and neglect of duty during the decisive action of July 27, 1778.

master has sent his final demand of forty-five thousand pounds for them to the Empress of Russia, at the same time that he has been what he calls improving the outside of the house; *basta!* Thus end all my visions about Houghton, which I never will *see*, though I must go thither at last; nor, if I can help it, think of more.

Your old acquaintance, Mr. Worseley⁴, is dead, and in a shocking way to us moderns, though *à la romaine*: he had such dreadful internal complaints, that he determined to starve himself, and for the four last days tasted exactly nothing.

My newly recovered voice will not permit me to dictate any longer: your nephew and the newspaper can tell you as much more as I could. If I have any judgement, which I doubt, the tragedy is coming rather to the fifth act than to the conclusion. Hitherto the drama has been carried on by relation, or—behind the scenes; now the *dénouement* may be on the stage. Adieu! I am quite tired.

1910. TO LADY BROWNE.

Arlington Street, Dec. 18, 1778.

My not writing with my own hand, to thank your Ladyship for your very obliging letter, is the worst symptom that remains with me, Madam: all pain and swelling are gone; and I hope in a day or two to get a glove even on my right hand, and to walk with help into the next room by the end of next week. I did, I confess, see a great deal too much company too early; and was such an old child as to prattle abundantly, till I was forced to shut myself up for a week and see nobody; but I am quite recovered, and the emptiness of the town will soon preserve me from any excesses.

⁴ James Worseley, Master of the Board of Works. *Walpole*.

I am exceedingly glad to hear your Ladyship finds so much benefit from the air. I own I thought you looked ill the last time I had the honour of seeing you; and though I am sorry to hear you talk with so much satisfaction of a country life, I am not selfish enough to wish you to leave Tusmore¹ a day before your health is quite re-established, nor to envy Mr. Fermor so agreeable an addition to his society and charming seat.

Poor Lady Albemarle is indeed very miserable and full of apprehensions; though the incredible zeal of the navy for Admiral Keppel crowns him with glory, and the indignation of mankind, and the execration of Sir Hugh, add to the triumph. Indeed, I still think Lady Albemarle's fears may be well founded: some slur may be *procured* on her son; and his own bad nerves, and worse constitution, may not be able to stand agitation and suspense.

Lady Blandford has had a cold, but I hear is well again, and has generally two tables. She will be a loss indeed to all her friends, and to hundreds more; but she cannot be immortal, nor would be if she could.

The writings are not yet signed, Madam, for my house², but I am in no doubt of having it; yet I shall not think of going into it till the spring, as I cannot *enjoy* this year's gout in it, and will not venture catching a codicil, by going backwards and forwards to it before it is aired.

I know no particular news, but that Lord Bute was thought in great danger yesterday; I have heard nothing of him to-day. I do not know even a match, but of some that are going to be divorced; the fate of one of the latter is to be turned into an exaltation, and is treated by her family and friends in quite a new style, to the discomfit of

LETTER 1910. — ¹ A seat of the Fermors in Oxfordshire.

² Horace Walpole's newly-pur-

chased house in Berkeley Square, of which he took possession in October 1779.

all prudery. It puts me in mind of Lord Lansdowne's lines in the room in the Tower where my father had been confined,

Some fall so hard, they bound and rise again.

Methinks, however, it is a little hard on Lord George Germaine, that in four months after seeing a Duchess of Dorset, he may see a Lord Middlesex too; for so old the egg is said to be, that is already prepared. If this trade goes on, half the peeresses will have two eldest sons with both fathers alive at the same time. Lady Holderness expresses nothing but grief and willingness to receive her daughter³ again on any terms, which probably will happen; for the daughter has already opened her eyes, is sensible of her utter ruin, and has written to Lord Carmarthen and Madam Cordon, acknowledging her guilt, and begging to be remembered only with pity, which is sufficient to make one pity her.

I would beg pardon for so long a letter, but your Ladyship desired intelligence, and I know a long letter from London is not uncomfortable at Christmas, even in the most comfortable house in the country. Perhaps my own forced idleness has a little contributed to lengthen it; still I hope it implies great readiness to obey your Ladyship's commands, in your most obedient humble servant.

1911. TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN¹.

Arlington Street, Dec. 24, 1778.

It was an additional mortification to my illness, my Lord, that I was not able to thank your Lordship with my

³ The Marchioness of Carmarthen. She eloped with Captain John Byron, and was divorced from her husband in May 1779.

LETTER 1911.—Collated with original in British Museum.

¹ David Steuart Erskine (1742–1829), eleventh Earl of Buchan.

own hand for the honour of your letter, and for your goodness in remembering an old man, who must with reason consider himself as forgotten, when he never was of importance, and is now almost useless to himself. Frequent severe fits of the gout have a good deal disabled me from pursuing the trifling studies in which I could pretend to know anything; or at least have given me an indifference, that makes me less ready in answering questions than I may have been formerly; and as my papers are in the country, whither at present I am not able to go, I fear I can give but unsatisfactory replies to your Lordship's queries.

The two very curious pictures of King James² and his Queen (I cannot recollect whether the third or fourth of the name, but I know that she was a princess of Sweden or Denmark, and that her arms are on her portrait) were at the palace of Kensington, and I imagine are there still. I had obtained leave from the Lord Chamberlain to have drawings made of them, and Mr. Wale³ actually began them for me; but he made such slow progress, and I was so called off from the thought of them by my indispositions and other avocations, that they were never finished; and Mr. Wale may, perhaps, still have the beginnings he made.

At the Duke of Devonshire's at Hardwicke, there is a valuable though poorly painted picture of James V and Mary of Guise, his second Queen; it is remarkable from the great resemblance of Mary Queen of Scots to her father; I mean in Lord Morton's picture of her, and in the image of her on her tomb at Westminster, which agree together, and which I take to be the genuine likeness. I have doubts on Lord Burlington's picture, and on Dr. Meade's. The nose in both is thicker, and also fuller at bottom

² King James III of Scotland; his wife was Margaret, daughter of Christian of Denmark.

³ Samuel Wale (d. 1786), historical painter and Professor of Perspective at the Royal Academy.

than on the tomb; though it is a little supported by her coins.

There is a much finer portrait, indeed, an excellent head, of the Lady Margaret Douglas at Mr. Carteret's at Hawnes in Bedfordshire (the late Lord Granville's). It is a very shrewd countenance, and at the same time with great goodness of character.

Lord Scarborough has a good picture, in the style of Holbein at least, of Queen Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII, and of her second or third husband (for, if I don't mistake, she had three⁴); but, indeed, my Lord, these things are so much out of my memory at present, that I speak with great diffidence. I cannot even recollect anything else to your Lordship's purpose; but I flatter myself that these imperfect notices will at least be a testimony of my readiness to obey your Lordship's commands, and that I am, with great respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient

Humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1912. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, Jan. 3, 1779.

At last, after ten weeks, I have been able to remove hither, in hopes change of air and the frost will assist my recovery; though I am not one of those ancients that forget the register, and think they are to be as well as ever after every fit of illness. As yet I can merely creep about the room in the middle of the day.

I have made my printer (now my secretary) copy out the

⁴ She married (1) James IV of Scotland; (2) Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus; (3) Henry Stewart, Baron Methven.

rest of Mr. Baker's life ; for my own hand will barely serve to write necessary letters, and complains even of them. If you know of any very trusty person passing between London and Cambridge, I would lend it to you, but should not care to trust it by the coach, nor to any giddy undergraduate that comes to town to see a play : and, besides, I mean to return you my own notes. I will say no more than I have said in apology to you for the manner in which I have written this life. With regard to Mr. Baker himself, I am confident you will find that I have done full justice to his worth and character—I do not expect you to approve the inferences I draw against some other persons—and yet, if his conduct was meritorious, it would not be easy to excuse those who were *active* after doing what he would not do. You will not understand this sentence till you have seen the life.

I hope you have not been untiled nor unpaled by the tempest on New Year's morning. I have lost two beautiful elms in a row before my windows here, and had the skylight demolished in town. Lady Pomfret's Gothic house in my street lost one of the stone towers, like those at King's Chapel, and it was beaten through the roof. The top of our cross, too, at Ampthill was thrown down, as I hear from Lady Ossory this morning. I remember to have been told that Bishop Kidder and his wife were killed in their bed in the palace at Gloucester in 1709¹, and yet his heirs were sued for dilapidations.

Lord de Ferrers², who deserves his ancient honours, is going to repair the castle of Tamworth, and has flattered me that he will consult me. He has a violent passion for ancestry—and, consequently, I trust will not stake the

LETTER 1912.—¹ They were killed in the palace at Wells (of which Kidder was Bishop) in Nov. 1703.

² George William Townshend (1753–1811), sixteenth Baron de Ferrers (a title to which he suc-

ceeded on his mother's death), eldest son of fourth Viscount (afterwards first Marquis) Townshend, whom he succeeded in 1807; cr. Earl of Leicester in 1784.

patrimony of the Ferrarii, Townshends, and Comptons at the hazard-table. A little pride would not hurt our nobility, cock and hen. Adieu! dear Sir, send me a good account of yourself. Yours ever,

H. W.

1913. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, Jan. 3, 1779.

YOUR Ladyship may be surprised at my dating hence, till you know my reasons. I mended so slowly in town that I hoped change of air would do better; but I moved with as much circumspection as if General Washington was watching me. I took the air four times in Hyde Park, before I began my march, and had this house baked for a week previously, and stayed for the frost. All these precautions have answered, negatively, that is, I have not suffered. I move but from the red to the blue room, and cannot walk even those three yards yet; but my spirits are better, which always flag when the fever is quite gone; so all my vivacity when I was at the worst was a little light-headed. In truth, I was so weary of town, which is a desert, and saw so very few people for the last week, that I could not bear it. I had no books or papers, or dogs or cats to amuse me, so I was swaddled up, and here I am; if I had anything else to say, I would have spared you this preface on myself, Madam.

The year commenced, indeed, with a very significant tempest: I grieve for the cross at Ampthill, but if storms have any meaning, I believe they do not come to give hints to individuals, but to nations. That on the New Year's morning was a very general declaration, and legible from Arlington Street to this place. The road was strewed with tiles, pales, bricks, and trees. I counted seven of the latter

down, two entire garden-walls at Brentford, as Mr. Whitchurch's and Mr. Franks's are here. My skylight was demolished in town, and here I have lost two beautiful elms in a line with this bow-window. Lady Jersey would not grieve more if she had lost two of her pretty fore-teeth. One of the stone Gothic towers at Lady Pomfret's house (now Single-Speech Hamilton's) in my street fell through the roof, and not a thought of it remains. There were only two maids in the house, who luckily lay backwards; but the greatest ruin is at my nephew Dysart's at Ham, where five-and-thirty of the old elms are blown down. I think it no loss, as I hope now one shall see the river from the house. He never would cut a twig to see the most beautiful scene upon earth.

Don't you like the remonstrance of the twelve admirals¹? and did you expect a rebellion in Wales? The ministers are not lucky in their attempts to raise a revenue; nor, indeed, in raising anything but rebellions. I begin to think we shall revert into a Heptarchy. I was diverted last week with a speech of Lord Townshend: he was coming out of Lord North's levee where he had *extorted* some favour, and met an acquaintance going in. 'Well,' said he, 'what are you going to ask?' The person was shy: 'Come, come,' said the Viscount, 'I am sure you want something: here, I'll lend you my pistols.'

You certainly laugh at me, Madam, when you propose my writing for you to Curtius. I have not his direction here, or would send it to you; but to be sure a letter for him to be left at his printer's would do.

I intend returning to the capital on Tuesday, if I am able to go abroad; or else shall stay here, where I have more comforts, and can divert myself better than waiting for accidental visits; for I make a rule never to ask anybody to

LETTER 1913,—¹ See the following letter.

come to me, which is intercepting them from something they would like better; if I end in my arm-chair, it shall be a punishment to nobody else.

1914. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, Jan. 5, 1779.

OLD women, our only remaining prophets, except the opposition and a little common sense, prognosticate great woes for the coming year, from the omens of its first day. A tempest at the instant of the new year made terrible havoc of tiles, chimneys, and trees; and at night great part of Greenwich Hospital was burnt. I doubt casualties will not be the sole completion of the augury. There is actually great apprehension for Jamaica, or, at least, some of the West Indian islands. I believe there are no eggs laid for achievements on our side, but some for discontent. The trial of Admiral Keppel is most unpopular, especially with his own profession. Lord Hawke and eleven other admirals have presented to the King a remonstrance against the precedent, on the lateness of the complaint, on the impropriety of it as subjecting commanders-in-chief to the uncertainty of opinion, and on the precipitation of the Admiralty in ordering the trial. A draft of the remonstrance was shown to Mr. Keppel himself; he tore it, and desired it might not be presented. This did him great honour, but did not prevent the delivery. I should think the Parliament would meet again in cloudy weather, though they may vote it is fair.

I came hither on New Year's Day to try change of weather, as I mend very slowly, or not at all. In truth, I expect but little melioration. My natural weakness, with so many attacks, so much gout in my constitution, and sixty-one—no elastic age, make me conclude that I shall not pass much

of my remaining time out of my own houses. It is a doom I shall not struggle with: I have no idea of forcing a helpless skeleton upon other people, nor can see myself but what I am. It seems strange to me that so many decrepit cardinals should have accepted the tiara, when they were as likely to be buried as crowned.

I shall carry this letter to town with me to-morrow, and add any news, if I hear any before Friday. I might, from the little I had to say, have waited till the Parliament met next week; but it seems as if I had not written to you for some time. Your nephew, I conclude, is out of town, for I have seen him but the once I told you. But I am still more impatient to hear from you again, as your last left you with remains of fever. I know you are not rash, and know how to manage yourself in fevers; but you have not good Dr. Cocchi to watch you, and I have no opinion of Italian Galens. I think, too, that there was low-spirited accent in your style, but trust it was the effect of the times. I impute to that habit an expression, which, though the effusion of your friendship and tenderness for me, I must reclaim against. You say you *love* and *adore* me. Jesus! my dear Sir! What an object of adoration! You put me in mind of what I have read in some traveller, who, viewing some Indian temple that blazed with gold and jewels, was at last introduced into the *sanctum sanctorum*, where behind the veil sat the object of worship—an old baboon! and, perhaps, poor pug's inside, as well as out, was fairer than mine!

8th.

I have no news to add: all eyes are now on Portsmouth, where the trial began yesterday. Prudence is not gone thither, nor had any hand in the business: but she has been out of fashion for some time; and her mimic, Cunning, does not act her part with success. Adieu!

1915. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Arlington Street, Jan. 9, 1779.

YOUR flight to Bath would have much surprised me, if Mr. Churchill, who, I think, heard it from Stanley, had not prepared me for it. Since you was amused, I am glad you went, especially as you escaped being initiated in Mrs. Miller's follies at Bath-Easton, which you would have mentioned. She would certainly have sent some trapes of a Muse to press you, had she known what good epigrams you write.

I went to Strawberry partly out of prudence, partly from *ennui*. I thought it best to air myself before I go in and out of hot rooms here, and had my house thoroughly warmed for a week previously, and then only stirred from the red room to the blue on the same floor. I stayed five days, and was neither the better nor the worse for it. I was quite tired with having neither company, books, nor amusement of any kind. Either from the emptiness of the town, or that ten weeks of gout have worn out the patience of all my acquaintance, but I do not see three persons in three days. This gives me but an uncomfortable prospect for my latter days: it is but probable that I may be a cripple in a fit or two more, if I have strength to go through them; and as that will be long life, one outlives one's acquaintance. I cannot make new acquaintance, nor interest myself at all about the young, except those that belong to me; nor does that go beyond contributing to their pleasures, without having much satisfaction in their conversation—but—one must take everything as it comes, and make the best of it. I have had a much happier life than I deserve, and than millions that deserve better. I should be very weak if I could not bear the uncomfortableness of old age, when I can afford what comforts it is

capable of. How many poor old people have none of them ! I am ashamed whenever I am peevish, and recollect that I have fire and servants to help me.

I hear Admiral Keppel is in high spirits with the great respect and zeal expressed for him. In my own opinion, his constitution will not stand the struggle. I am very uneasy too for the Duke of Richmond, who is at Portsmouth, and will be at least as much agitated.

Sir William Meredith has written a large pamphlet, and a very good one. It is to show, that whenever the Grecian republics taxed their dependents, the latter resisted, and shook off the yoke. He has printed but twelve copies : the Duke of Gloucester sent me one of them. There is an anecdote of my father, on the authority of old Jack White, which I doubt. It says he would not go on with the Excise scheme, though his friends advised it. I cannot speak to the particular event, as I was then at school ; but it was more like him to have yielded, against his sentiments, to Mr. Pelham and his candid—or say, plausible and timid friends. I have heard him say that he never did give up his opinion to such men but he always repented it. However, the anecdote in the book would be more to his honour. But what a strange man is Sir William ! I suppose, now he has written this book, he will change his opinion, and again be for carrying on the war—or, if he does not know his own mind for two years together, why will he take places, to make everybody doubt his honesty ?

1916. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Jan. 14, 1779.

By not hearing from me for a fortnight you may imagine, Madam, that I go out, and have been diverting myself to

repair lost time. Oh, my life is very giddy and dissipated! My exquisite enjoyment has consisted in two returns of pain and lameness; my expeditions, taking the air, with the contrast of new confinement; and my *menus plaisirs*, a few sprinkled visits of charity from a few friends that remained in town. My silence, therefore, has proceeded from suppression of lamentations, and from having nothing to place in their stead.

By Monday I expect company and events; but as I hope you and Lord Ossory will be in the former class, I shall have no occasion to send you the latter. I have heard nothing but what cannot interest your Ladyship or me, that Lady Priscilla Bertie¹ is to marry Mr. Burrell², and that an Irish Lady Kingsborough has introduced the fashionable fashion of elopements at Dublin.

There is, in sooth, a charming novelty to-day of a very different kind; an answer³ from Mr. Gibbon to the monks that have attacked his two famous chapters. It is the quintessence of argument, wit, temper, spirit, and consequently of victory. I did not expect anything so luminous in this age of Egyptian darkness—nor the monks either. Alas! how can he have any of the heaven left?

Did you see Mr. Anstey's verses at Bath-Easton? They were truly more a production of this century; and not at all too good for a schoolboy. In the printed copy they have omitted an indecent stanza or two on Mrs. Macaulay. In truth, Dame Thucydides has made but an uncouth match⁴; but Anstey has tumbled from a greater height than she.

LETTER 1916.—¹ Daughter of the Duke of Ancaster.

² Peter (1754–1820), eldest son of Peter Burrell, of Beckenham, Kent; succeeded his uncle as second Baronet, 1787; cr. (June 16, 1796) Baron Gwydyr, of Gwydyr, Carnarvonshire.

³ *The Vindication of his History of the Decline and Fall* from the attacks of Davis and Chelsum.

⁴ Mrs. Macaulay married in Dec. 1778 (as her second husband) William Graham, brother of James Graham, the quack doctor.

Sense may be led astray by the senses ; but how could a man write the *Bath Guide*, and then nothing but doggerel and stupidity ?

Mr. Crawford has come in as I was writing ; he tells me everything goes *swimmingly* for Admiral Keppel, which he is very glad of ; but he is very sorry for Palliser. I cannot be so equitable, if it is unjust to rejoice that a scoundrel is odious ; besides, it will give a hint that it is not absolutely safe to be so.

1917. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Jan. 15, 1779.

I SEND you by Dr. Jacob, as you desired, my Life of Mr. Baker, and with it your own materials. I beg you will communicate my MS. to nobody—but if you think it worth your trouble, I will consent to your transcribing it—but on one condition, and a silly one for me to exact, who am as old as you, and broken to pieces, and very unlikely to survive you ; but, should so improbable a thing happen, I must exact that you will keep your transcript sealed up, with orders written on the cover, to be restored to me in case of an accident : for I should certainly dislike very much to see it printed without my consent. I should not think of your copying it, if you did not love so much to *transcribe*, and sometimes things of as little value as my MS. I shall beg to have it returned to me by a safe hand as soon as you can, for I have nothing but the foul copy which nobody can read, I believe, but I and my secretary.

I am actually printing my justification about Chatterton, but only two hundred copies to give away, for I hate calling in the whole town to a fray, of which otherwise probably not one thousand persons would ever hear. You shall have a copy as soon as ever it is finished, which my printer says

will be in three weeks. You know my printer is my secretary too: do not imagine I am giving myself airs of a numerous household of officers.

I shall be glad to see the letter of Mr. Baker you mention. You will perceive two or three notes in my MS. in a different hand from mine, or that of my *amanuensis* (still the same *officer*): they were added by a person I lent it to, and I have effaced part of the last.

I must finish lest Dr. Jacob should call, and my parcel not be ready. I hope your sore throat is gone; my gout has returned again a little with taking the air only, but did not stay—however, I am still confined, and almost ready to remain so, to prevent disappointment. Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1918. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, Jan. 28, 1779.

I WRITE in as much hurry as you did, dear Sir, and thank you for the motive of yours: mine is to prevent your fatiguing yourself in copying my MS., for which I am not in the least haste; pray keep it till another safe conveyance presents itself. You may bring the gout, that is, I am sorry to hear, flying about you, into your hand by wearying it.

How can you tell me I may well be cautious about my MS. and yet advise me to print it?—no, I shall not provoke nests of hornets, till I am dust, as they will be too.

If I dictated tales when ill in my bed, I must have been worse than I thought; for, as I know nothing of it, I must have been light-headed. Mr. Lort was certainly misinformed; though he seems to have told you the story kindly to the honour of my philosophy, or spirits—but I had rather have

no fame than what I do not deserve. I am fretful or low-spirited at times in the gout, like other weak old men, and have less to boast than most men. I have some strange things in my drawer, even wilder than the *Castle of Otranto*, and called *Hieroglyphic Tales*¹—but they were not written lately, nor in the gout, nor, whatever they may seem, written when I was out of my senses. I showed one or two of them to a person since my recovery, who may have mentioned them, and occasioned Mr. Lort's misintelligence. I did not at all perceive that the latter looked ill; and hope he is quite recovered. You shall see Chatterton soon. Adieu!

1919. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Jan. 29, 1779.

SUSPENSE still! The court-martial continues, and everything respectfully awaits its determination: even France and America seem to lie upon their oars till the oracle at Portsmouth has pronounced. The response, however, is not likely to be ambiguous. There has been such juggling to warp the judgement of the priests of Neptune; and the frauds have been so openly detected, and salt-water Flamens are so boisterous when they can see through an imposition; that Palliser and his accomplices, high and low, will probably rue the tempest they have brewed. I hinted in my last that there is a man¹, whom you once knew well, that prefers cunning to prudence: he will not exult in the choice he has made. The Duke of Marlborough and Lord Pembroke declare against the First Lord of the Admiralty; the second is expected to be less out [of] humour with the court-martial than with being denied the Mastership of

LETTER 1918.—¹ Printed in the fourth volume of Horace Walpole's *Works*.

LETTER 1919.—¹ Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty. *Walpole*.

the Horse; but, when a tide turns, it sweeps many along with it. I will say no more of politics; the horizon does not clear—but I have no events to tell you. I write only to amuse your impatience.

Garrick is dead; not a public loss, for he had quitted the stage. He is to be buried on Monday in great ceremony at Westminster Abbey; but, not having been so inattentive to worldly riches as Lord Chatham, his family will not be provided for by Parliament. They had both great merit in their different walks, and were both good actors; but we are Athenians enough to be full as fond of the stage as of the state. Both, at present, are a little in want of a genius.

There is a report that the poor simple Lord Maynard² has shot himself at Naples—is it true? The Duke of Dorset³ is almost in as bad a scrape as if *he* had married Lady Maynard. He is waiting for a Duchess till Lady Derby⁴ is divorced. He would not marry her before Lord Derby did, and now is forced to take her, when he himself has made her a very bad match. A quarter of our peeresses will have been wives of half our living peers.

You must be content with these brief letters, while I write for your satisfaction rather than for your information. I am recovered enough to go to a few places; but I do not, nor can expect to mend so fast as when younger.

1920. TO EDWARD GIBBON.

[1779.]

THE penetration, solidity, and taste, that made you the first of historians, dear Sir, prevent my being surprised

² He had married the well-known Nancy Parsons, who had been kept by the Dukes of Grafton, Dorset, &c., but it was not true that he had killed himself. *Walpole*.

³ John Frederick Sackville, third Duke of Dorset.

⁴ Lady Elizabeth Hamilton. The divorce did not take place. *Walpole*.
LETTER 1920.—Wrongly placed by

at your being the best writer of controversial pamphlets too¹. I have read you with more precipitation than such a work deserved, but I could not disobey you and detain it. Yet even in that hurry I could discern, besides a thousand beauties and strokes of wit, the inimitable eighty-third page, and the conscious dignity that you maintain throughout over your monkish antagonists. When you are so superior in argument, it would look like insensibility to the power of your reasoning, to select transient passages for commendation; and yet I must mention one that pleased me particularly, from the delicacy of the severity, and from its novelty too; it is, 'Bold is not the word.' This is the feathered arrow of Cupid, that is more formidable than the club of Hercules. I need not specify thanks, when I prove how much I have been pleased.

Your most obliged.

1921. TO EARL HARCOURT.

MY DEAR LORD,

Feb. 1, 1779.

Mrs. Damer has consulted me on a case of heraldic conscience, on which I am not competent: you must forgive me for troubling your Lordship, for whither can I recur but to an oracle? She has been told that she has no right to use crest and motto, is that so? Ought not she, too, as an only child, to bear her arms in an escutcheon of pretence?

I was at the Vesey-chaos last night, and wish Lady Harcourt and your Lordship had been behind a cloud. I must do Mrs. Montagu the justice to say that I never heard more warm encomiums on both, and the Irish bore equal testimonies.

C. between letters of March and April 1779.

cation, which appeared early in January 1779.

¹ A reference to Gibbon's *Vindi-*

I hope you are all perfectly easy about Mrs. Harcourt, of whom I heard a very good account yesterday.

Your Lordship's most dutiful,

H. WALPOLE.

1922. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Feb. 1, 1779.

WHEN Lord Ossory is in town, Madam, I do not presume to think of writing. He is more in the world, and hears everything sooner than I do; nor would it be fair to him, to divide a moment of your time with him. However, there were such interesting topics in the letter I had the honour of receiving this evening, that I must answer it directly. But I shall waive the first subject, which concerns myself, to come to the last, that touches your Ladyship; and can I but admire your goodness in thinking of me, when an angel is inoculated? You must now continue it, for you have promised I shall hear how she goes on. Sweet little love! you must be anxious, though inoculation now can scarce be called a hazard. It is as sure as a cheat of winning, though a strange run of luck may once in two thousand times disappoint him.

The pictures at Houghton, I hear, and I fear, are sold: what can I say? I do not like even to think on it. It is the most signal mortification to my idolatry for my father's memory, that it could receive. It is stripping the temple of his glory and of his affection. A madman excited by rascals has burnt his Ephesus. I must never cast a thought towards Norfolk more; nor will hear my nephew's name if I can avoid it. Him I can only pity; though it is strange he should recover any degree of sense, and never any of feeling! I could have saved my family, but cannot repent the motives that bound my hands. If

any unhappy lunatic is ever the better for my conduct and example, it is preferable to a collection of pictures.

Yes, Madam, I do think the pomp of Garrick's funeral perfectly ridiculous. It is confounding the immense space between pleasing talents and national services. What distinctions remain for a patriot hero, when the most solemn have been showered on a player?—but when a great empire is on its decline, one symptom is, there being more eagerness on trifles than on essential objects. Shakespeare, who *wrote* when Burleigh counselled and Nottingham¹ fought, was not rewarded and honoured like Garrick who only *acted*, when—indeed I do not know who has counselled and who has fought.

I do not at all mean to detract from Garrick's merit, who was a real genius in his way, and who, I believe, was never equalled in both tragedy and comedy. Still I cannot think that acting, however perfectly, what others have written, is one of the most astonishing talents: yet I will own as fairly that Mrs. Porter and Mademoiselle Dumenil have struck me so much, as even to reverence them. Garrick never affected me quite so much as those two actresses, and some few others in particular parts, as Quin, in Falstaff; King², in Lord Ogleby; Mrs. Pritchard, in Maria, in the *Nonjuror*; Mrs. Clive, in Mrs. Cadwallader; and Mrs. Abington, in Lady Teazle. They all seemed the very persons: I suppose that in Garrick I thought I saw more of his art; yet his Lear, Richard, Hotspur (which the town had not taste enough to like), Kiteley, and Ranger, were as capital and perfect as action could be. In declamation, I confess, he never charmed me; nor could he be a gentleman; his Lord Townley and Lord Hastings were mean, but

LETTER 1922.—¹ Charles Howard, first Earl of Nottingham, who, as Lord Howard of Effingham, was in

command at the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

² Thomas King (1730–1805).

then too the parts are indifferent, and do not call for a master's exertion.

I should shock Garrick's *devotees* if I uttered all my opinion: I will trust your Ladyship with it—it is, that Le Texier is twenty times the genius. What comparison between the powers that do the fullest justice to a single part, and those that instantaneously can fill a whole piece, and transform themselves with equal perfection into men and women, and pass from laughter to tears, and make you shed the latter at both? Garrick, when he made one laugh, was not always judicious, though excellent. What idea did his Sir John Brute give of a surly husband? His Bayes was no less entertaining; but it was a garreteer-bard. Old Cibber preserved the solemn coxcomb; and was the caricature of a great poet, as the part was designed to be.

Half I have said I know is heresy, but fashion had gone to excess, though very rarely with so much reason. Applause had turned his head, and yet he was never content even with that prodigality. His jealousy and envy were unbounded; he hated Mrs. Clive, till she quitted the stage, and then cried her up to the skies, to depress Mrs. Abington. He did not love Mrs. Pritchard, and with more reason, for there was more spirit and originality in her Beatrice than in his Benedick.

But if the town did not admire his acting more than it deserved, which indeed in general it was difficult to do, what do you think, Madam, of its prejudice, even for his writings? What stuff was his Jubilee Ode, and how paltry his prologues and epilogues! I have always thought that he was just the counterpart of Shakespeare; this, the first of writers, and an indifferent actor; that, the first of actors, and a woful author. Posterity would believe me, who will see only his writings; and who will see those of another modern idol, far less deservedly enshrined, Dr. Johnson.

I have been saying this morning, that the latter deals so much in triple tautology, or the fault of repeating the same sense in three different phrases, that I believe it would be possible, taking the ground-work for all three, to make one of his *Ramblers* into three different papers, that should all have exactly the same purport and meaning, but in different phrases. It would be a good trick for somebody to produce one and read it; a second would say, 'Bless me, I have this very paper in my pocket, but in quite other diction'; and so a third.

Our Lord has been so good as to call on me again, and found me; but I take for granted will make his little Gertrude a visit to-morrow, though probably not bring your Ladyship with him till she is recovered. I am in no pain, even for her beauty.

As the court martial is likely to end this week, I suppose the Parliamentary campaign will be warmly renewed the next; but what campaign will restore this country to its greatness? It is blotted out of the list of mighty empires; and they who love processions may make a splendid funeral for it!—but, indeed, it was buried last year, with Lord Chatham, at whose interment there were not half the noble coaches that attended Garrick's!

Feb. 9, 1779.

I am thoroughly concerned, Madam, for yours and Lord Ossory's disappointment, and very sorry you trusted to a surgeon in the country, as they must have less experience. However, if a second trial should fail, you may be very easy, for I believe there is scarce an instance of the small-pox naturally, after two inoculations. The late Lady Lothian, who was in that case, I know never had it. For your perfect tranquillity, I still wish it may appear; she will certainly have very few, with so little disposition to infection.

You are both so very partial to me, Madam, that I dare not gulp your commendation of the pamphlet³. I wrote it just to say I had cleared myself, and have given very few away, and had rather it was soon forgotten, as it is likely to be in such distracted times. I sincerely do not recollect why I did not return the first papers; I have spoken strict truth to the best of my memory, and cannot tell whether I forgot or reserved them to transcribe.

You blame my humility, and therefore I will not give the answer you expect; especially as I have others ready. In the first place, I have not impartiality enough for such a work as Mr. Elmsley⁴ thinks me fit for. In the next, it would be an imitation, and there even my humility fails me; and the last and strongest plea is, that I am twenty years too old to write what if well written would demand twenty years to write, allowing the necessary time for collecting materials; but I have already scribbled a vast deal too much. I must publish my fourth volume of *Painters*, and then intend the world shall hear my name no more.

The weather has been disagreeably too hot, but I cannot say has affected me *en bien ou en mal*. I certainly recover more slowly than ever, as is natural; and therefore conclude reasonably that one more severe fit will totally confine me. I go nowhere but into very private rooms, nor think of others; and now dispense with my saying any more of myself, Madam. You forbid me humility, and yet all I say and do is founded on the consciousness of my own weakness, and on the dread of being blind to my own defects.

We are in greater confusion than all the world knows. Last night came an account of a serious insurrection at

³ Horace Walpole's *Letter to the Editor of the Miscellanies of Thomas Chatterton*.

⁴ Probably Peter Elmsley (1736-1802), a bookseller.

Edinburgh, where the mob has burnt two mass-houses, and threatened some lives. The state of Ireland is still more alarming: Lord Buckingham⁵ is coming away. There are rumours of changes, and certainly overtures for them. It is declared that Lord Suffolk⁶ desires to retire. We may have novelties; but whence is there any hope?

I give your Ladyship my word that I know of no offers that my nieces have refused or even received. Lies are so rampant that they may have been involved in the havoc. One would think there were sad subjects enough of all sorts to glut the maw of ill-nature, but like Crawford, it had rather dine where it is not asked than where invited. Your Ladyship's words imply no malicious account in what you have been told; but falsehood is predominant, and not a hundredth part of what one hears every day is true.

I long to hear that you are at ease about Lady Gertrude; and then I will indulge the hope of seeing you. In the meantime pray permit me in my turn to tax your Ladyship's humility. Pray read all Mr. Gibbon's pamphlet, and do not fear not understanding it. It is luminous as day, and clearness one of his brightest talents. I am sure the whole will delight you. It is Mr. Gibbon that *can make the driest subject interesting and entertaining*, and his reply to Davies is the strongest evidence that can be given.

1923. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Feb. 4, 1779.

I HAVE received the MS., and though you forbid my naming the subject more, I love truth, and truth in a friend so much, that I must tell you, that so far from taking your sincerity ill, I had much rather you should act with your

⁵ The Earl of Buckinghamshire, Viceroy of Ireland.

⁶ Secretary of State for the Northern Province.

native honest sincerity than say you was pleased with my MS. I have always tried, as much as is in human nature, to divest myself of the self-love of an author; in the present case I had less difficulty than ever: for I never thought my *Life of Mr. Baker* one of my least indifferent works. You might, believe me, have sent me your long letter, whatever it contained: it would not have made a momentary cloud between us. I have not only friendship, but great gratitude for you, for a thousand instances of kindness—and should detest any writing of mine that made a breach with a friend, and still more if it could make me forget obligations.

I am,

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1924. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 11, 1779.

I AM only getting ready this letter for to-morrow, when it is to set out with the full triumph of Admiral Keppel, which is expected in town to-night from Portsmouth. The fronts of several houses are already decorated with lamps, and, as soon as the courier arrives, I suppose the whole town will be in a blaze—I hope, only of light; but, when a mob expresses its joy, one may always fear lest it should mistake mischief for merriment. The guards are ordered to be doubled: I fancy a few of them will not be far from the Admiralty¹.

The good people of Edinburgh have set but an ugly example. There has been a serious insurrection against the Papists, and two mass-houses were burnt; and the Provost quieted the tumult only by promising that the toleration of

LETTER 1924. — ¹ Lord Sandwich, Keppel's enemy, was First Lord of the Admiralty. *Walpole*.

Popery should not be extended to Scotland. This will be agreeable news to the Americans, who did not expect to see the administration reproved by Scots.

You will not be agitated by popular rumours. If I repeat them to you, it is, that if anything should happen, you may not be surprised. In a word, some changes at least are expected, particularly in the Admiralty, the rudder of which, it is said, has been offered to Lord Howe,—some say, and refused by him; others, that he objected to Lord George Germaine; and others, that he demands an inquiry on himself and his brother. Lord Suffolk is certainly to retire on the plea of infirmity, which is a reason why he should not have come into place; and Lord Buckingham is to quit Ireland, and, I believe, is allowed to say, at his own request too—he also might have had an earlier plea: in short, difficulties at present are more plentiful than resources. *Per contra*, Spain is said to have offered us her mediation, and to have it accepted. Yesterday I heard that the Duke of Medina Sidonia had actually set out for Paris on that errand, but was dead on the road. The want of a successor will not be an impediment, if there is no other.

This minute I receive your tender letter of the 16th of last month: but pray, my dear Sir, be easy about me; I am as much recovered as probably I shall be. I go out, and walk tolerably with a cane. To be sure, another severe fit may confine me at home; but, as I do not indulge distant hopes, why should I disturb myself with future fears? I have patience and submission, and they are at least as potent as cares. Of everything I make the best I can. Immediate vexations one cannot easily divert; but gloomy thoughts that are resident, and return only when the mind is vacant, I remove by any amusement that offers. This is my case about my nephew and Houghton. I forget them as fast as possible, though I own they frequently return.

It is very true, I did desire the pictures should be sold, as I preferred his paying his grandfather's and father's debts to false splendour; but that is not the case now. As he is not legally obliged, he does not think of acquitting his father's debts; and, as he has compounded his grandfather's unsatisfied debts for fifteen thousand pounds, he does not want forty thousand. In short, I am persuaded that the villainous crew about him, knowing they could not make away clandestinely with the collection in case of his death, prefer money which they can easily appropriate to themselves. Whether the price affixed is adequate, or too low, is difficult to say. Imaginary value depends on circumstances and times. I once should have thought forty thousand pounds a high price: the whole collection made by my father, of which there have already been three sales, cost but that sum. Five years ago, with the opulence and rage for *virtù*, they would have produced more. At present, not so much. Last night I heard the bargain is not concluded. Cipriani² was desired to value them, and has called in West. To be sure, I should wish they were rather sold to the crown of England than to that of Russia, where they will be burnt in a wooden palace on the first insurrection: here they would be still Sir Robert Walpole's collection. But my grief is that they are not to remain at Houghton, where he placed them, and wished them to remain. Pride and piety leave me but that desire.

At midnight.

I am this moment come in, and may as well write to you as go to bed; for it is impossible to sleep, from the noise of squibs and crackers. The sentence³ arrived at

² Giovanni Battista Cipriani (1727-1785).

³ 'The court, on Feb. 11, pronounced that the charge was "malicious and ill-founded"; that Keppel

had behaved as became "a judicious, brave, and experienced officer"; and thereupon unanimously and honourably acquitted him.' (D. N. B.)

half an hour after nine, and in two hours the whole town was illuminated. I drove with two ladies from Grosvenor Square to Spring Garden, to wish old Lady Albemarle⁴ joy. She had just been blooded, for she is seventy-five, but you may imagine was in happy spirits; for the sentence is as honourable as possible, and terms the accusation unfounded and malicious in every article. Palliser escaped from Portsmouth this morning at five, and arrived in a hired post-chaise at the Admiralty; but was known as he entered, and was pulled by the populace by the coat, but got in safe. We passed twice by his house in Pall Mall just now, and found a mob before it, but a strong guard of soldiers and constables. The people have not been riotous yet: but as they are flinging squibs, and the streets are full, there will be accidents if no determined mischief. I hope to-morrow morning to hear that the night has passed quietly, which will be to the honour of the opposition. The opposition in my father's time were not of so harmless a complexion; but as he was guiltless, which is known and allowed now, malevolence could only keep up a spirit against him by clamour. But, good night! I will reserve the rest of my paper for to-morrow.

Friday morn, 12th.

My servants, who have been out this morning, tell me that about three o'clock the mob forced their way into Palliser's house, in spite of the guards, and demolished everything in it; and that they broke the windows of Lord George Germaine and of Lord North, and that several of the rioters are taken up. How wise in an unsuccessful administration to have commenced accusation!

You talk of skating on the Arno—it is hot enough here

⁴ Lady Anne Lenox, youngest daughter of Charles Lenox, first Duke of Richmond, widow of William Anne, second Earl of Albe-

marle, mother of George, third Earl, and of Admiral Augustus Keppel. *Walpole*.

to bathe in the Thames. I was literally forced to throw off the quilt of my bed the night before last—the women are afraid of an earthquake. I will write again soon, for I think there will be matter.

P.S. The mob entirely gutted Sir Hugh Palliser's house, but the furniture had been removed.

1925. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Bedfordshire¹, Feb. 17, 1779.

I ACCEPT Lady Gertrude's single pustule, Madam, in full of all accounts: it is an ambassador that completely represents its principal, and is authorized to sign *peace* in its name. I could almost imagine that you had sent me the pimple itself, *for* I found a rosebud and two cowslips in your letter, which would be a prettier transformation than any in Ovid.

I am not fond of mobs, Madam, though I like the occasion, and can but compare the feel I had from them, with what I should suffer were the illuminations for the conquest of America. After putting out those lights we should have heard,—

And then put out *the* light.

Liberty has still a continent to exist in: I do not care a straw who is minister in this abandoned country. It is the *good old cause of freedom* that I have at heart; and the vexation and mortification that I have seen for these last days, tell me what we have escaped, if I did not know it before.

We had a most brilliant Westminster last night, and guns and squibs till six in the morning; but the City, I hear, was not illuminated. Lady Greenwich, looking uglier than ever with rage, said she would go out of town,

LETTER 1925.—¹ Walpole was probably writing in bed. See also letter 1928.

since she could not be safe in her own house. I replied, 'Madam, I believe your Ladyship must not go to Edinburgh to be quiet, for the tumults there are a little more serious than ours.' In truth, I, who was born in an age of mobs, never saw any like those of this week; they were, as George Montagu said of our earthquakes, *so tame you might have stroked them*. I drove through the whole City beyond the Royal Exchange on Friday night with my nieces, to show them the illuminations, and back through Holborn and St. James's Square, where was the greatest concourse, and passed as quietly as at noonday. I own I was diverted to see fear surmount pride. The Duke of Northumberland, who, on the eve of accepting his place², would have drenched the populace with beer and ale, would not put out lights till midnight, and then was forced to hang out flambeaux; and so was Lord Weymouth, who has been in a charming panic, for he has no spirit even when he is drunk. It is pleasant to see those who condemned the towns of America to fire and sword terrified with crackers.

I found Admiral Keppel at the Duchess of Richmond's this morning: he looks ill, and quite exhausted with fatigue. He has not been at court, or the House of Commons yet, and will go out of town as soon as he can: for my part I shall not light another candle till Lady Gertrude arrives in full beauty.

1926. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Feb. 18, 1779.

I SENT you my Chattertoniad last week, in hopes it would sweeten your pouting, but I find it has not; or has miscarried, for you have not acknowledged the receipt with your usual punctuality.

² As Master of the Horse.

Have you seen Hasted's¹ new *History of Kent*? I am sailing through it, but am stopped every minute by careless mistakes. They tell me the author has good materials, but is very negligent; and so I perceive. He has not even given a list of monuments in the churches, which I do not remember omitted in any history of a county—but he is rich in pedigrees; though I suppose they have many errors too, as I have found some in those I am acquainted with. It is unpardonable to be inaccurate in a work in which one nor expects nor demands anything but fidelity.

We have a great herald arising in a very noble race, Lord de Ferrars. I hope to make him a Gothic architect too: for he is going to repair Tamworth Castle, and flatters me that I shall give him sweet counsel. I enjoin him to *kernellare*. Adieu!

Yours ever,

H. W.

1927. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, Feb. 18, 1779.

I PROMISED you a sequel to my history of illuminations, and here it is. They were repeated on Friday night, the 12th; and were more universal than on the preceding evening, but without the least disorder or riot. The day before yesterday the Admiral himself arrived, as privately as he could; but at night all Westminster was again lighted up and part of the City, and guns and crackers were fired till morning, and yet no mischief done. The two Houses have voted compliments to him, and the City its freedom. Paliser has resigned his seat at the Admiralty, and vacated that in Parliament, for fear of being expelled. He has demanded a trial; but the Admiralty is accused of being

LETTER 1926.—¹ Edward Hasted published in four folio volumes between (1732-1812). His *History* was pub- 1778 and 1799.

less eager to order it than they were that of Keppel. The latter had not been at court yesterday, nor in the House; but there have been motions in both Houses leading to the attack on Lord Sandwich. It is not known whether he will be removed or not. The town believes there have been negotiations with the opposition, but that the terms offered were not satisfactory. I assert so little, that I shall certainly draw you into no rash credulity. Were you here, you might believe twenty false reports every hour. It is not always the case of persons at a distance to be the best informed; but you have a very cautious historian.

I often meet at Gloucester House a Baron Rutherford, who is penetrated with friendship and gratitude for you: there is no esteem he does not express for you.

I shall reserve the rest of my paper till to-morrow; for, though I send you nothing but facts, every day may produce some event at present. The times have a bag of eggs like a pullet.

19th.

The Admiral was at the House yesterday, when the Speaker¹ harangued him in a fine oration, they say; to which he made a very modest and pathetic answer. To-morrow he is to be congratulated and banqueted by the City, on which, I hear, we are to be again illuminated; but I am tired of crackers, and shall go quietly to Strawberry. There was to be a motion in the Commons to-day for addressing the King to remove Palliser from his other posts of General of the Marines and Governor of Scarborough; but I shall not know the result before the post is gone out, and must refer you to the newspapers.

The French will not like the *éclaircissement* of the court martial, by which it is clear they were beaten and fled. The City, which does not haggle, has expressed this a little

grossly in their address to Keppel. I do not love exultation. There is no grace but in silent victory. Our insults to the Americans at the outset of the war were not in the character of this country; and double the shame on those who have certainly not been victorious over them! The authors of the war have made a woful figure from the beginning to this day!

P.S. Remember, that when you do not hear frequently, you may be sure I have nothing particular to tell you. All eggs are not hatched that are even laid.

1928. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Bedfordshire, Feb. 23, 1779.

As you bid me write again before your arrival, and do not name the day, I hurry to obey you, Madam, though I have nothing to tell you, but how happy I shall be to see you. Were I a good courtier, to be sure I should announce *the great news*, as called, of the capture of Santa Lucia¹. I did say there was great want of good news when this conquest was so dignified! I think the last King of Great Britain should thence be called Lucius, as the first Christian King of it was. *My humility* does not stoop to exultation on such pigmy victories; but it does find matter of triumph on seeing that when your Ladyship pretends to vanity, you are still forced to borrow your proofs from humility: for is not it being lowly in mind to be proud of agreeing in opinion with others, and not depending on your own taste? Your Ladyship's example will sooner confirm me than your arguments cure me; nay, I beg you will leave me one virtue, lest I should not be

LETTER 1928.—¹ Santa Lucia capitulated to the English under General Grant in Dec. 1778.

worth one. I have at the same time a supreme reverence for pride; for that honest pride that makes one respect oneself, and prevents one's wading through every kennel to keep one's place. Oh that it should be possible to be insolent on the strength of majorities, and when the tide turns, to crouch to those one has insulted, and beseech them to accept of treachery to one's friends as an atonement! Humble or not, I would burst with pride rather than so debase myself.

The winter has, indeed, Madam, been worthy of last summer. On the contrary, Sir Horace Mann tells me they have skating on the Arno². I went to Strawberry on Saturday to enjoy the sun, and to avoid the squibs and crackers. There was a great deal of glass shed at night, and they say the illuminations are to be repeated on Thursday, when the Admiral is to dine with the West India merchants.

The rejoicings have produced exceeding ill-humour, which being very productive of the same temper in its adversaries, I think the nation will awake a little from its slumbers. Whenever the thorough *reveil* does come, it will be very serious!

Poor Mrs. Brand is dead of a sore throat; Lady Priscilla Bertie is married to-day, and the Queen has produced another Prince³.

Pray make my Io Pæans to Lady Gertrude upon her recovery from renoculation; and tell Lady Anne that—

C cannot claim Castalia's choicest lay,
As Ann and Amptill ask it all for A.

P.S. Mr. Beauclerk has just called, and told me a shocking history. Sir Hugh Palliser has a sister at York, whom

² Hitherto printed Anio. See letter to Mann of Feb. 11, 1779.

³ Prince Octavius; d. 1783.

he supported. As if the poor woman was not wretched enough with his disgrace and ruin, or accessory to his guilt, the mob there has demolished her house, and she is gone mad. What a bill would the authors of the American war have to pay, if they were charged as they deserve with all the calamities it has given date to! however, I do believe they are as sorry as if they were penitent!

1929. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Feb. 25, 1779.

YOUR veritable nephew brought me, yesterday, your letter of the 6th, which came by the courier, and he has just sent me a message that your servant is to set out on his return at three o'clock, and it is now noon, and I am expecting a person on business, so that I shall have but a minute to write.

My last letters have hinted at the disgraces Lord Sandwich's artifices have brought on the court by the absurd persecution of Admiral Keppel. It was very near overturning the administration; and the Chancellor¹, Lord Weymouth, and the Paymaster² (a little faction of themselves) would have tumbled the rest down, could they have offered enough to content the opposition. I think the present system will hold together something longer, though their credit is much shaken. The opposition is not very able, the session is far advanced, and a little success has arrived to prop them. St. Lucia is taken, secures St. Vincent's, and if Byron joins that expedition unhurt by D'Estaing, the West Indies will be saved. These are 'Ifs'; but yet more than the ministers have had for some time. The other expedition to Georgia has prospered too, but is too small, and with the winter to struggle through, to be of much

LETTER 1929.—¹ Lord Thurlow.² Mr. Rigby. *Walpole*.

consequence: and you see we have not as yet sent a man to America of late, nor can get a thousand. In short, what I would not mention but by your own courier, nothing can be more deplorable than our prospect. It was but yesterday Lord North could tell the House he had got the money on the loan, and is happy to get it under eight per cent. Then the new taxes are to come, and new discontent; though ill-humour certainly rises very little in proportion to the distresses; yet even that has a bad cause—the indifference and dissipation of the whole country. I doubt it must be some great blow that will rouse us. I doubt whether the French will think of Minorca. Our greatest felicity is that they seem to have *thought* as little as we. Is it credible that they should have attempted nothing? The war hitherto has been a war of privateering, in which France has suffered most. In one word, the backwardness of Spain has saved us. Their junction with France had given the finishing blow.

This is but a sketch, and as much as I have time to tell you. I do not say so much, nor anything to your nephew that might give him an impression that might recoil on you. Indeed, I do but look on, and lament the fall of England. I think the opposition composed of honester but not of abler men than the administration. Easy I am so far, that the ill-success of the American war has saved us from slavery—in truth, I am content that liberty will exist anywhere, and amongst Englishmen, even 'cross the Atlantic. The Scots, who planned our chains, have, as formerly, given the court some heartaches, and would be the first to give more if the tide should turn. I think the King will support Sandwich still; though the load on him is heavy. Admiral Keppel has behaved with much decency, and more temper than could be expected. There was more riot on Saturday, when he dined in the City, and much fracture of windows; but it

is generally believed that the court hired the mob, to make the other side sick of rejoicing. The Admiral has declined another dinner, with the West India merchants, to prevent more tumult; and, now St. Lucia is taken, I believe they are glad to be rid of him.

This is enough for a comment on my late letters. You know, I never shift my principles with times. The times, alas! have shifted their principles; but I am interrupted, and must seal my letter, lest it be too late.

1930. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 9, 1779.

THERE has been a moment in which the scales have been more equally balanced than for some years; but the fluctuation has not lasted a week. On Wednesday, the opposition in the House of Commons mounted to 170, and the majority sunk to 34. Yesterday, though the former mustered four more votes, the administration rejected the motion by a majority of 72. The questions both days related to the fleet. Yesterday Admiral Keppel and Lord Howe declared they could not serve under the present ministers; yet I think the latter will stand their ground, even to Lord Sandwich, though the general opinion is that he will have the seals, which Lord Suffolk's death has vacated. He died at the Bath on Saturday, whither he was but just arrived in a desperate state. His death is no blow but to his family. Seldom was he able to do any business; and had no talents when he could.

While I am writing to you I am wishing for some member of the House of Commons to come in, to give me an account of your nephew: for one of the morning papers says he spoke yesterday for the court; and, though I am persuaded well, I want to be told so; and, as I dine abroad, I am at

least as eager to be able to tell you so, and am afraid of not knowing it in time. I did write to you by your courier, but believe he did not set out by some days so soon as I expected; however, he must arrive before this.

We have, undoubtedly, made a great number of French prizes; and D'Estaing, in particular, has made a woful figure. They say at Paris, that, if ever he is Marshal of France, 'au moins son bâton ne sera pas du bois de Sainte-Lucie¹.' There do not seem to spring many heroes out of this war on either side. Fame has shut her temple, too, in Germany: yet I think that both the Emperor and King of Prussia have some claim on history; the latter by clipping Cæsar's soaring wings, and Cæsar by having kept so old and so able a professor at bay for a whole campaign. Still, the professor has carried a great point by having linked his interests with those of the Empire. The gratitude of those princes might soon wear out; but it is their interest to maintain a great, though new, power, that can balance the house of Austria.

We have no private news of any sort. As, by your desire, I write more frequently than formerly, you must be content with shorter letters; for distance and absence deprive us of the little incidents of common correspondence. I am forced to write to you of such events only as one would write to posterity. One cannot say, 'I dined with such a person yesterday,' when the letter is to be a fortnight on the road; still less, when you know nothing of my Lord or Mr. Such-an-one, whom I should mention.

I hear very wild accounts of my nephew. His chief occupation is his militia: he plagues them so much, that they are half as mad as himself. The reports about the sale of his pictures are uncertain too. I know he himself

LETTER 1930.—¹ A kind of wood had fallen into the hands of the peculiar to that island, which English.

holds different language at different times and to different persons. Well! he has long prepared me for the worst! So it will not be unexpected if it comes!

Your nephew desired me to give him a list of pamphlets for you; I told him, as is true, that there is scarcely any such thing. The pamphleteers now vent themselves in quotidian letters in the newspapers. Formerly, you know, there were only weekly essays in a *Fog's Journal* or *Craftsman*: at present, every morning paper has one page of political invective at least, and so coarse, that they would be as sour as vinegar before they reached Florence: you would *cross* yourself at reading them.

I asked you about a report of Lord Maynard's sudden death. We know it was false, and that his wife, who has always some fascinating powder, has established herself at the court of Naples by dispensing James's. They say she is universally visited, except by those English prudes, the Countesses of Berkeley and Orford. I should not wonder if the former was to dethrone Lady Maynard by distributing Keysar's pills².

P.S. I kept my letter open to the last minute, and am now vexed to tell you that the *Public Advertiser* misled me. Your nephew did speak yesterday, and very well; but not for the administration. It surprises me much; for the last time I saw him, not a fortnight ago, his language was very different, as it was before Christmas; and I told you how much I encouraged him in those sentiments on your account; not that I think any man could be so unjust as to impute his deviations to you, who would be the last man upon earth to instil opposition into him. I hope he has no such intention, and that this sally will have no suite. It would be impossible for me, and so out of character that it would

² For the cure of a disgusting disease. *Walpole*.

have no weight, to argue with him, when I have ever so totally condemned the American war, which has undone us; but I shall entreat him not to frequent the House, and to return to you, rather than act a part that would be so displeasing to you. I think if, in your gentle way, you lamented yourself to him, his congenial nature would be more struck than even if he had not acted contrary to your wishes. I have not time to say a word more—but do not torment yourself. Trust to your own merit; and, if your modesty is too great for that, call in philosophy, that is a real comforter, when coupled with the consciousness of having done our duty.

1931. TO LORD HAILES.

Arlington Street, March 12, 1779.

I HAVE received this moment from your bookseller, Sir, the valuable present of the second volume of your *Annals*, and beg leave to return you my grateful thanks for so agreeable a gift, of which I can only have taken a look enough to lament that you do not intend to continue the work. Repeated and severe attacks of the gout forbid my entertaining visions of pleasures to come; but though I might not have the advantage of your labours, Sir, I wish too well to posterity not to be sorry that you check your hand.

Lord Buchan did me the honour lately of consulting me on portraits of illustrious Scots. I recollect that there is at Windsor a very good portrait of your countryman Duns Scotus, whose name struck me on just turning over your volume. A good print was made from that picture some years ago, but I believe it is now very scarce: as it is not worth while to trouble his Lordship with another letter for that purpose only, may I take the liberty, Sir, of begging you to mention it to his Lordship?

1932. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, March 22, 1779.

If your representative dignity is impaired westward, you may add to your Eastern titles those of 'Rose of India' and 'Pearl of Pondicherry'. The latter gem is now set in one of the vacant sockets of the British diadem.

I have nothing to subjoin to this high-flown paragraph that will at all keep pace with the majesty of it. I should have left to the *Gazette* to wish you joy, nor have begun a new letter without more materials, if I did not fear you would be still uneasy about your nephew. I hear he has, *since his parenthesis*, voted again with the court; therefore he has probably not taken a new *part*, but only made a Pindaric transition on a particular question. I have seen him but twice since his arrival, and from both those visits I had no reason to expect he would act differently from what you wished. Perhaps it may never happen again. I go so little into the world, that I don't at all know what company he frequents. He talked so reasonably and tenderly with regard to you, that I shall be much deceived if he often gives you any inquietude.

The place of Secretary of State is not replenished yet. Several different successors have been talked of. At least, at present, there is a little chance of its being supplied by the opposition. Their numbers have fallen off again, though they are more alert than they used to be. I do not love to foretell, because no Elijah left me his mantle, in which, it seems, the gift of prophecy resides; and, if I see clouds gathering, I less care to announce their contents to foreign

LETTER 1932.—¹ Taken on Oct. 17, 1778, by the combined land and sea forces under Lieutenant-General

Hector Monro and Admiral Sir Edward Vernon.

post offices. On the other hand, it is no secret, nor one to disguise if it were, that the French trade must suffer immensely by our captures.

Private news I know none. The bishops are trying to put a stop to one staple commodity of that kind, adultery. I do not suppose that they expect to lessen it; but, to be sure, it was grown to a sauciness that did call for a decenter veil. I do not think they have found out a good cure; and I am of opinion, too, that flagrancy proceeds from national depravity, which tinkering one branch will not remedy. Perhaps polished manners are a better proof of virtue in an age than of vice, though system-makers do not hold so: at least, decency has seldom been the symptom of a sinking nation.

When one talks on general themes, it is a sign of having little to say. It is not that there is a dearth of topics; but I only profess sending you information, necessary information, on events that really have happened, to guide you towards forming a judgement. At home, we are fed with magnificent hopes and promises that are never realized. For instance, to prove discord in America, Monsieur de la Fayette² was said to rail at the Congress, and their whole system and transactions. There is just published an intercourse between them that exhibits enthusiasm in him towards their cause, and the highest esteem for him on their side. For my part, I see as little chance of recovering America as of reconquering the Holy Land. Still I do not amuse you with visions on either side, but tell you nakedly what advantage has been gained or lost. This caution abbreviates my letters; but, in general, you can depend on what I tell you. Adieu!

² Marie Jean Gilbert Motier (1757-1834), Marquis de la Fayette. He left France to join the Americans at the beginning of the War of

Independence. He was afterwards a prominent figure during the French Revolution.

Tuesday, 24th.

I hear this moment that an account is come this morning of D'Estaing with sixteen ships being blocked up by Byron at Martinico³, and that Rowley⁴ with eight more was expected by the latter in a day or two. D'Estaing, it is supposed, will be starved to surrender, and the island too. I do not answer for this intelligence or consequences; but, if the first is believed, you may be sure the rest is.

1933. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, March 28, 1779.

YOUR last called for no answer; and I have so little to tell you, that I only write to-day to avoid the air of remissness. I came hither on Friday, for this last week has been too hot to stay in London; but March is arrived this morning with his north-easterly malice, and I suppose will assert his old style claim to a third of April. The poor infant apricots will be the victims of that Herod of the almanack.

I have been much amused with new travels through Spain by a Mr. Swinburne¹—at least with the account of the Alhambra, of the inner parts of which there are two beautiful prints. The Moors were the most polished, and had most taste of any people in the Gothic ages; and I hate the knave Ferdinand and his bigoted Queen for destroying them. These new travels are simple, and do tell one a little more than late voyagers, by whose accounts one would think there was nothing in Spain but muleteers and fandangos—in truth, there does not seem to be much worth seeing but prospects—

³ Byron kept D'Estaing shut up at Martinique till June, when he escaped during Byron's absence at St. Christopher's.

⁴ Rear-Admiral Joshua Rowley

(d. 1790), created a Baronet in 1786.

LETTER 1933. — ¹ Henry (1743-1803), fourth son of Sir John Swinburne, third Baronet, of Capheaton, Northumberland.

and those, unless I were a bird, I would never visit, when the accommodations are so wretched.

Mr. Cumberland has given the town a masque, called *Calypso*, which is a prodigy of dullness. Would you believe, that such a sentimental writer would be so gross as to make cantharides one of the ingredients of the love-potion for enamouring Telemachus? If you think I exaggerate, here are the lines :

To these, the hot Hispanian fly
Shall bid his languid pulse beat high.

Proteus and Antiope are Minerva's missionaries for securing the prince's virtue, and in recompense they are married, and crowned king and queen !

I have bought at Hudson's² sale a fine design of a chimney-piece, by Holbein, for Henry VIII.—If I had a room left, I would erect it. It is certainly not so Gothic as that in my Holbein room ; but there is a great deal of taste for that bastard style. Perhaps it was executed at Nonsuch. I do intend, under Mr. Essex's inspection, to begin my offices next spring—it is late in my day, I confess, to return to brick and mortar ; but I shall be glad to perfect my plan, or the next possessor will marry my castle to a Doric stable. There is a perspective through two or three rooms in the Alhambra, that might easily be improved into Gothic, though there seems but small affinity between them ; and they might be finished within with Dutch smiles³, and painting, or bits of ordinary marble, as there must be gilding. Mosaic seems to be their chief ornaments, for walls, ceilings, and floors. Fancy must sport in the furniture, and mottoes might be galant, and would be very Arabesque. I would have a mixture of colours, but with strict attention to harmony and taste ; and some one should

² Thomas Hudson, the painter. He died at Twickenham in Jan. 1779.

³ So in MS. ; probably a slip for 'tiles.'

predominate, as supposing it the favourite colour of the lady who was sovereign of the knight's affections who built the house. Carpets are classically Mahometan, and fountains—but, alas, our climate till last summer was never romantic! Were I not so old, I would at least build—a Moorish novel—for you see my head runs on Granada—and by taking the most picturesque parts of the Mahometan and Catholic religions, and with the mixture of African and Spanish names, one might make something very agreeable—at least I will not give the hint to Mr. Cumberland. Adieu! Yours ever,

H. W.

1933*. TO THOMAS ASTLE.

Strawberry Hill, April 6, 1779.

ANY company that you like to bring, dear Sir, to see this house, will always be very welcome. I am afraid I shall not be able to be here myself to show it to you on Saturday, but I will leave orders that you may see it at your leisure, and am with great regard, Sir,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1934. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Bedfordshire, April 8, 1779.

I DID not answer your Ladyship's letter, as I generally do, the moment I received it, because I had nothing to tell you about the remnant of myself, which is the worst subject in the world. I have been six days at Strawberry Hill, and I think the soft south-west did me good; but I have a constant feverish heat that seems to be undermining my

LETTER 1933*.—Not in C.; now first printed from copy of original in possession of Mr. Grenville H. Norcross.

ruins ; however, its progress is very slow ; and so if you please we will say no more of it ; but your goodness in inquiring is written on my heart's last tablet. Mr. Mason was with me for two days : he is printing the third book of his *Garden*.

Lord Harrington¹ is gathered to his fathers, or rather, is taken from his *mothers*. Lord Beauchamp's son² is well again. Lord Harrington has left my Lady 2,500*l.* besides her jointure of 1,500*l.* a year ; to Lady Anna Maria 6,000*l.* ; 5,000*l.* to Mr. Stanhope³, and an estate of 150*l.* a year ; but there are so many debts that the legacies are more magnificent than generous. The charming house at St. James's is to be sold ; but it is supposed the present Earl will purchase it.

This is all I have heard, Madam, since I came to town yesterday, which is perfectly empty ; the grass grows in the streets, though nowhere else, for the climate is turned as Asiatic as the government ; and it is to be hoped that in time there will be elephants and tigers of our own growth in the Sultan's gardens, to the great satisfaction of Sir William Chambers. I was pleased yesterday to see that, though everything old-fashioned is going out of date, we have still resources. If our trade decays we have new handicrafts : at Turnham Green I read on a large board—*manufacture of temples*. I suppose the Archbishop of York will set up looms in his diocese for Popish chapels, and Manchester weave dungeons for the Inquisition. The Pope's bull against the Dissenters' Bill is actually issued from the Clarendon printing-house. I was interrupted by the strangest story I ever heard, and which I cannot yet believe, though it is certainly true. Last night as Miss Wray⁴ was getting into her coach in

LETTER 1934. — ¹ William Stanhope, second Earl of Harrington.

² Hon. Francis Charles Seymour Conway, afterwards third Marquis of Hertford.

³ Hon. Henry Stanhope, his second son ; d. 1828.

⁴ Miss Martha Ray, mistress of Lord Sandwich.

Covent Garden from the play, a clergyman shot her through the head, and then himself. She is dead ; but he is alive to be hanged—in the room of Sir Hugh Palliser. Now, Madam, can one believe such a tale ? How could poor Miss Wray have offended a divine ? She was no enemy to the church militant or naval, to the Church of England, or the church of Paphos. I do not doubt but it will be found that the assassin was a Dissenter, and instigated by the Americans to give such a blow to the state. My servants have heard that the murderer was the victim's husband : methinks his jealousy was very long-suffering ! *Tantaene animis caelestibus irae !* and that he should not have compounded for a deanery ! What trials Lord Sandwich goes through ! he had better have one for all.

Friday, 9th.

I gave David this letter yesterday, and had forgotten to seal it, which he did not perceive till I was gone out for the evening. Instead of sealing it he kept it for me till this morning after I had written my second. I send both to show I had been punctual, though all the novelty is evaporated, and my intelligence is not worth a farthing more than the newspaper.

April 9, 1779.

Ladies, said a certain philosopher, always tell their minds in the postscript. As that is the habitation of truth, I send you, Madam, a little more truth than there was in my narrative of yesterday, which was warm from the first breath of rumour : yet though this is only a postscript I will not answer for its perfect veracity. It is the most authentic account I have yet been able to collect of so strange a story, of which no doubt you are curious to know more.

The assassin's name is Hackman ; he is brother to a reputable tradesman in Cheapside, and is of a very pleasing figure himself, and most engaging behaviour. About five

years ago he was an officer in the 66th Regiment, and being quartered at Huntingdon, pleased so much as to be invited to the oratorios at Hinchinbrook, and was much caressed there. Struck with Miss Ray's charms he proposed marriage; but she told him she did not choose to carry a knapsack. He went to Ireland, and there changed the colour of his cloth, and at his return, I think not long ago, renewed his suit, hoping a cassock would be more tempting than a gorget; but in vain. Miss Wray, it seems, has been out of order, and abroad but twice all the winter. She went to the play on Wednesday night for the second time with Galli the singer. During the play the desperate lover was at the Bedford Coffee House, and behaved with great calmness, and drank a glass of capillaire. Towards the conclusion, he sallied into the piazza, waiting till he saw his victim handed by Mr. Macnamara. He came behind her, pulled her by the gown, and on her turning round, clapped the pistol to her forehead, and shot her through the head. With another pistol he then attempted to shoot himself, but the ball only grazing his brow, he tried to dash out his own brains with the pistol, and is more wounded by those blows than by the ball.

Lord Sandwich was at home expecting her to supper at half an hour after ten. On her not returning an hour later, he said something must have happened: however, being tired, he went to bed at half an hour after eleven, and was scarce in bed before one of his servants came in and said Miss Ray was shot. He stared, and could not comprehend what the fellow meant; nay, lay still, which is full as odd a part of the story as any. At twelve came a letter from the surgeon to confirm the account; and then he was extremely afflicted.

Now, upon the whole, Madam, is not the story full as strange as ever it was? Miss Ray has six children, the

eldest son is fifteen, and she was at least three times as much. To bear a hopeless passion for five years, and then murder one's mistress—I don't understand it! If the story clears up at all, your Ladyship shall have a sequel. These circumstances I received from Lord Hertford, who heard them at court yesterday from the Lords of the Admiralty. I forgot that the Galli swooned away on the spot.

I do not love tragic events *en pure perte*. If they do happen, I would have them historic. This is only of kin to history, and tends to nothing. It is very impertinent in one Hackman, to rival Herod, and shoot Mariamne—and *that* Mariamne a kept mistress! and yet it just sets curiosity agog, because she belongs to Lord Sandwich, at a critical moment—and yet he might as well have killed any other inhabitant of Covent Garden.

1935. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, April 12, 1779.

As your gout was so concise, I will not condole on it, but I am sorry you are liable to it if you do but take the air.

Thank you for telling me of the vendible curiosities at the alderman's. For St. Peter's portrait to hang to a fairy's watch, I shall not think of it, both as I do not believe it very like, and as it is composed of invisible writing, for which my eyes are not young enough. In truth, I have almost left off making purchases; I have neither room for anything more, nor inclination for them, as I reckon everything very dear, when one has so little time to enjoy it. However, I cannot say but the plates by Rubens do tempt me a little—yet, as I do not care to buy even Rubens in a poke, I should wish to know if the alderman would let me see if it were but one.

Would he be persuaded? I would pay for the carriage, though I should not buy them.

Lord de Ferrers will be infinitely happy with the sight of the pedigree, and I will certainly tell him of it, and how kind you are.

Strype's account, or rather Stow's, of Richard's person is very remarkable—but I have done with endeavouring at truth. Weeds grow more naturally than what one plants. I hear your Cantabrigians are still unshaken Chattertonians. Many men are about falsehood, like girls about the first man that makes love to them; a handsomer, a richer, or even a sincerer lover cannot eradicate the first impression—but a sillier swain, or a sillier legend, sometimes gets into the head of the miss or the learned man, and displaces the antecedent folly. Truth's kingdom is not of this world.

I do not know whether our clergy are growing Mahometans or not: they certainly are not what they profess themselves—but as you and I should not agree perhaps in assigning the same defects to them, I will not enter on a subject which I have promised you to drop. All I allude to now is the shocking murder of Miss Ray by a divine. In my own opinion, we are growing more fit for Bedlam than for Mahomet's paradise. The poor criminal in question, I am persuaded, is mad—and the misfortune is, the law does not know how to define the shades of madness; and thus, there are twenty out-pensioners of Bedlam, for one that is confined. You, dear Sir, have chosen a wiser path to happiness by depending on yourself for amusement. Books and past ages draw one into no scrapes; and perhaps it is best not to know much of men till they are dead. I wish you health; you want nothing else.

Yours most truly,

H. W.

1936. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, April 17, 1779.

I AM grieved to hear of your having the rheumatism so acutely in your head. Though it is not dangerous, like the gout, its duration is more fluctuating, and not consistent in a fit. I trust it will be gone long before I hear again; but the suspense will be very uneasy to me, and one of the evils of such great distance.

I was glad to hear your nephew had himself given you an account of his parenthesis of opposition, as you can speak more freely to him than if you had learnt it only from me. Very uncertain it is when I shall see him again, which I have done but thrice; nor could I expect more from so much younger a man. We live in very different worlds, or rather I live almost out of it, and he quite in it, and yet not where I do. At this time of year, too, I am here half the week. I hope he will give you no more uneasiness; but you must have patience if he does. Nephews and nieces are not very tractable. My own uncle did not find *me* so; and I do not wonder at others. One must wrap oneself up in oneself. People have difficulty enough of conducting their own children—mercy on us, were we to answer for collaterals.

There have been no Parliamentary clouds, because during the holydays there has been no Parliament: but the political horizon does not clear up. I bade you a little expect the conquest of Martinico; but that prospect seems pretty much vanished. If the letters yesterday from France speak truth, our trust in Spain is dispelled likewise: it is said she has declared for the Americans too, and it has been whispered here for these two days:—there is no occasion to comment on that addition to our load!—nor shall I tell

you other ugly symptoms. A Spanish war is as much as you can digest at once. If I alarm you on bad grounds, it will make amends for my having vainly promised you Martinico ; though I never warrant but what is actually passed.

Though Sir Hugh Palliser's trial has been begun this week, the public does not honour it with the same attention as Keppel's. It does not brighten for the Vice-Admiral.

For the last week all conversation has been engrossed by a shocking murder, committed on the person of a poor woman connected with a most material personage now on the great stage. You will have seen some mention of it in the papers ; I mean the assassination of Miss Ray, Lord Sandwich's mistress, by a clergyman, who had been an officer, and was desperately in love with her, though she is between thirty and forty, and has had nine children. She was allowed to be most engaging ; and so was the wretched lover, who had fixed his hopes of happiness on marrying her, and had been refused, after some encouragement ; I know not how much. On his trial yesterday he behaved very unlike a madman, and wishes not to live. He is to suffer on Monday, and I shall rejoice when it is over ; for it is shocking to reflect that there is a human being at this moment in so deplorable a situation. It would be foolish to repeat that we are a nation of lunatics ; yet, with so many outward and visible signs, can one avoid thinking so ? Alas ! we are likely to undergo sharp purgations, that may bring us to our senses again ! The loss of blood has not yet cured us. For the loss of money, it has had but the same effect on the nation as on our youthful gamesters—it has made us more extravagant.

I shall reserve the rest of my paper till Tuesday : perhaps I may be able to contradict the Spanish article.

Tuesday.

No ; I do not affirm nor deny : however, nothing is yet public, and I imagine there is still some negotiation going on, as the Spanish Ambassador receives frequent couriers, and writes much.

The poor assassin was executed yesterday. The same day Charles Fox moved for the removal of Lord Sandwich, but was beaten by a large majority ; for in Parliament the ministers can still gain victories. Adieu !

1937. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

DEAR SIR,

Arlington Street, April 20, 1779.

I have received the plates very safely, but hope you, nor the alderman, will take it ill that I return them. They are extremely pretty and uncommonly well preserved—but I am sure they are not by Rubens, nor, I believe, after his designs, for I am persuaded they are older than his time. In truth, I have a great many of the same sort, and do not wish for more. I shall send them back on Thursday by the Fly, and will beg you to inquire after them, and I trust they will arrive as safely as they did to

Yours ever,

H. W.

1938. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

April 23, 1779.

I OUGHT not to trouble you so often when you are not well : but that is the very cause of my writing now. You left off abruptly from disorder, and therefore I wish to know it is gone.

The plates I hope got home safe. They are pretty, especially the reverses ; but the drawing in general is bad.

Pray tell me what you mean by a *priced* catalogue of the

pictures at Houghton. Is it a printed one? if it is, where is it to be had?—odd questions from *me*; and which I should not wish to have mentioned as coming from me. I have been told to-day that they are actually sold to the Czarina—*sic transit*!—mortifying enough, were not everything transitory! We must recollect that our griefs and pains are so, as well as our joys and glories; and, by balancing the account, a degree of comfort is to be extracted.—Adieu! I shall be heartily glad to receive a better account of you.

1939. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, April 24, 1779.

I BEGIN my letters here, because I am alone and have leisure, of which I cannot be sure in town; and, should I have any sudden news to send, I might not have time to add the trifles I may wish to add.

I met your nephew the other night at the Duchess of Montrose's¹, and was happy to hear he had received a more recent and better account of you than what you gave me of the rheumatism in your head. I will send you by him bootikins for both hands and feet. I sometimes have rheumatic pains in the shoulder in the evening, and a bootikin on my hand immediately removes it. I should hope it would be as efficacious for the head, should it return thither, contrary to my earnest wishes.

The decision of Spain is not publicly known yet. In France they expect it in their favour². Some here still think it will be a neutrality. Did one judge any longer by the stocks, the augury would be good. They cannot reasonably have risen, as they have done, on the diminutive

LETTER 1939.—¹ Lady Lucy Manners, daughter of the Duke of Rutland. Lady Lucy Mann, Sir Horace's

wife, was related to her. *Walpole*.

² The looked-for accommodation did not take place. *Walpole*.

success in Georgia, which has not even encouraged the victors to hope to advance, without what they are far from receiving, a reinforcement. Nor are we more prosperous against D'Estaing; nor is the capture of eight or nine Domingo-men very beneficial to stockholders: but so much industry is used of late in bolstering up the stocks, that they are no longer the weather-glass of fortune, but part of the mask employed to disguise the nation's own face to itself.

There has been a motion in each House this week for the removal of Lord Sandwich; but both Houses think him as white as snow. Palliser, probably, will be equally blanched. The Howes, on the other hand, will come immaculate out of the furnace: I believe, if the Duchess of Kingston was to return, she might be voted into her old post of Maid of Honour. Lord Lyttelton, who thinks he has talents for Secretary of State, and that want of principles is no impediment (it was not to his being Justice in Eyre), has again turned against the court on not obtaining the seals. The grass would grow in our Temple of Virtue, if it was the sole vestibule to our Temple of Honours. Governor Johnstone, having had such clumsy success as ambassador of peace to America, has made his bargain, and is turned into a commodore of a cruising squadron. It is judicious enough, I think, to convert such men as go upon the highway of fortune into privateers; but what a figure do we make in Europe! Unable to raise the sums we want for the war, the members of that Parliament that is told so are yet occupied in preying on the distresses of the Government! What comments must Dr. Franklin make on every newspaper to the French ministers!

27th.

I find nothing new in town. Rumours of peace continual. I doubt it is easier for both sides to be sick of the war, than to know how to agree. I doubt, too, that *we* want peace

more than we desire it; and, as we must buy it dear, we shall not be so ready to pay the price. It will not be very sincere to the Americans, if we do conclude; and though intentional insincerity often promotes peace, and at least makes the sufferers shut their eyes to their own loss, we have betrayed such propensity to duplicity, that the other side will aggravate the bargain; for, as cunning is no new invention, it is equally in the power of both parties to employ it. Mankind will not remember that honesty cannot be detected.

I should not send away this scrap, and with so little intelligence, if I were not glad to tell you that I am easier about your disorder. I will not write again soon without more substantial news.

1940. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Thursday.

I CANNOT think of going to the play to-night, Madam; nor can be out of the way of hearing the first news that shall come. I have done what was right; I approved and applauded Mr. Conway's going instantly¹; but I cannot pretend to be easy now he is gone. My feelings for my friends are stronger and more sincere than my philosophy; and great is the difference between advising them to act as they ought, and being indifferent to the consequence.

1941. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, May 9, 1779.

AN invasion announced by the common post from Paris, attempted, repulsed, given up, and known here: all this has

LETTER 1940.—Hitherto printed as part of the letter to Lady Ossory of Nov. 13, 1777. (See *Notes and*

Queries, Sept. 15, 1900.)

¹ To Jersey. See the following letter.

happened in eight days, and in miniature ; but it was a large object, and a long and anxious interval to me, for the object was Jersey, Mr. Conway's government, and he went post to defend it. He has no idea of danger, and has the strongest one of doing his duty to a scruple ; but I will now be methodical, for *you* want information, not a rhapsody on my sensations.

On the 1st of May, yesterday sevensnight, there were forty letters in town that proclaimed an intended attack on Jersey, of fifteen hundred men commanded [by] a Prince of Nassau, who was to be declared king of the island. A secret expedition advertised with so slender a force, exceeded by the troops on the isle, to say nothing of the ridicule of such a Roi d'Yvetot, did not make much impression : however, Mr. Conway spread his wings, with my approbation ; and, on confirmation arriving on Monday, set out that night. It seems the islanders, besides provoking France by their privateers and numerous captures, had imprudently advertised a sale, in August next, of prizes, to the amount of a vast sum, which would have been a kingdom indeed to a little necessitous Prince. He collected a small army of vagabonds, like his predecessor Romulus ; but who had so little taste for the adventure when its destination was known, that he was forced to select fifty men from his more regular regiment to defend his person against the companions of his armament. It happened that Admiral Arbuthnot¹, who was going to convoy four thousand recruits to America, had been detained, though probably the French thought him sailed ; and, hearing of the invasion, immediately sailed to Jersey, without staying for orders. The attack, however, had been made on the 1st of the month : the French had at-

LETTER 1941.—¹ Admiral Marriot pointed to command on the North
Arbuthnot (d. 1794), recently ap- American station.

tempted to land, but Lord Seaforth's² new-raised regiment of seven hundred Highlanders, assisted by some militia and some artillery, made a brave stand and repelled the intruders; and, as every *Nassau* does not conquer a British island merely by his presence, the visionary monarch sailed back to France on the 2nd, and King George and Viceroy Conway remain sovereigns of Jersey—whom God long preserve!

We heard of the repulse on Thursday; but it was not till late in the night of Friday that an account came of the retreat, and I did not learn it till Saturday morning; in which interval there seemed to be twice eight-and-forty hours, and yet I had concluded that the French would be retired before Mr. Conway could reach his dominions. We had reports of the Brest fleet being sailed, and this little episode does look a little like a feint. Negotiation is said to be at an end or a pause. Arbuthnot's activity, though greatly commendable, is a detrimental delay; and we have reason enough to expect other damage. I did hint to you that we had more thorns than one in our pillow: it is now too publicly known to be disguised any longer, that Ireland has much the air of Americanizing. Our oppressive partiality to two or three manufacturing towns in England has revolted the Irish, and they have entered into combinations against purchasing English goods, in terms more offensive than the first associations of the colonies. In short, we have for four or five years displayed no alacrity or address, but in provoking our friends and furnishing weapons of annoyance to our enemies; and the unhappy facility with which the Parliament has subscribed to all these oversights has deceived the Government into security, and encouraged it to pull almost the whole fabric

² Kenneth Mackenzie (1744–1781), first Earl of Seaforth of the new creation, known from 1766 to 1771 as Viscount Fortrose.

on its own head. We can escape but by concessions and disgrace ; and, when we attain peace, the terms will prove that Parliamentary majorities have voted away the wisdom, glory, and power of the nation.

The House of Commons has exposed itself wofully these last days in a less affair. They have refused, voted, unvoted, and revoted an inquiry into the conduct of the war ; and all the generals at the bar have declared the impossibility of conquering America : so, the House has nothing to do to preserve its consequence, but to vote it *shall* still be conquered.

Palliser's trial has ended as shamefully. He is acquitted, *with honour*, of not having obeyed his Admiral's signals : which is termed blamable for not having given the reason why he did not ; and that reason was the rottenness of his mast, with which he returned to Portsmouth, without its being repaired yet. The world is expecting his restoration ; for, when Keppel risked his own reputation to save Palliser's, ought not the latter to be recompensed for accusing his benefactor ? But I am sick of specifying all our ignominy ; I wish I had any tittle-tattle of less consequence to fill my letters with. I will go answer yours, and try to forget England, as it has forgotten itself ! Oh, but you ask if Byron has beaten D'Estaing and taken Martinico ? Not quite ; on the contrary, our conquerors are swept away by a mortality in Santa Lucia and in Georgia. Content yourself with privateering ; we have no other success.

The Presbyterians of Scotland will not condole with you on the Pope's illness ; they forswear him tooth and nail. Mrs. Anne Pitt is confined, and, the last time I heard of her, was very bad. Make many compliments, pray, for me to the house of Lucan ; but, between you and me, I am not at all delighted with their intending to bring me a present. I do not love presents, and much less from anybody but

very dear friends. That family and I are upon very civil terms ; our acquaintance is of modern date, and rather waned than improved. Lady Lucan has an astonishing genius for copying whatever she sees. The pictures I lent her from my collection, and some advice I gave her, certainly brought her talent to marvellous perfection in five months ; for before, she painted in crayons, and as ill as any fine lady in England. She models in wax, and has something of a turn towards poetry ; but her prodigious vivacity makes her too volatile in everything, and my Lord follows wherever she leads. This is only for your private ear. I desire to remain as well as I am with them ; but we shall never be more intimate than we are. I am not at all acquainted with your Lord Bishop³ and my lady his wife. His mother⁴, who was much my friend, I believe did not highly reverence his sincerity ; I never in my life met him at her house.

Adieu ! my dear Sir. Do not let rumours, good or bad, agitate you. Bear public misfortunes with firmness. Private griefs hurry away our thoughts, and belong solely to ourselves ; but we may be excused taking more than our share in general calamities.

1942. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Arlington Street, May 21, 1779.

As Mr. Essex has told me that you still continue out of order, I am impatient to hear from yourself how you are. Do send me a line ; I hope it will be a satisfactory one.

Do you know that Dr. Ducarel has published a translation of a *History of the Abbey of Bec* ? There is a pretty print to it ; and one very curious circumstance, at least valuable

³ Hon. Frederick Hervey, Bishop of Derry, afterwards fourth Earl of Bristol. His wife was Elizabeth,

daughter of Sir Jermyn Davers, of Rougham, Suffolk.

⁴ Mary Lepel, Baroness Hervey.

to us disciples of Alma Mater Etonensis. The ram-hunting¹ was derived from the manor of Wrotham in Norfolk, which formerly belonged to Bec, and being forfeited, with other alien priories, was bestowed by Henry VI on our college. I do not repine at reading any book from which I can learn a single fact that I like to know. For the lives of the abbots, they were, according to the author, all pinks of piety and holiness—but there [are] a few other facts amusing, especially with regard to the customs of those savage times—especially that the Empress Matilda was buried in a bull's hide, and afterwards had a tomb covered with silver.

There is another new book called *Sketches from Nature*, in two volumes, by Mr. G. Keate, in which I found one fact too, that, if authentic, is worth knowing. The work is an imitation of Sterne, and has a sort of merit, though nothing that arrives at originality. For the foundation of the church of Reculver, he quotes a MS. said to be written by a Dominican friar of Canterbury, and preserved at Louvain. The story is evidently metamorphosed into a novel, and has very little of an antique air; but it affirms that the monkish author attests the beauty of Richard III. This is very absurd, if invention, and has nothing to do with the story; and therefore one should suppose it genuine. I have desired Dodsley to ask Mr. Keate if there truly exists such a MS.—if there does, I own I wish he had printed it rather than his own production; for I agree with Mr. Gray, 'that any man living may make a book worth reading, if he will but set down with truth what he

LETTER 1942.—¹ 'I remember another ancient custom or tenure at Eton College, which was hunting the ram. On a certain day in August, a ram was turned loose in the playing-fields and the boys hunted it with knotted clubs till

they killed him. Latterly he was hamstrung before turned out and immediately dispatched. Now I believe the practice is totally dropped.' MS. note by Walpole in his copy of Robertson's *Topographical Survey* (1792).

has seen or heard, no matter whether the book is well written or not.'—Let those who can write glean.

1943. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Arlington Street, May 22, 1779.

IF you hear of us no oftener than we of you, you will be as much behindhand in news as my Lady Lyttelton. We have seen a traveller that saw you in your island¹, but it sounds like hearing of Ulysses. Well! we must be content. You are not only not dethroned, but owe the safety of your dominions to your own skill in fortification. If we do not hear of your extending your conquests, why, it is not less than all our modern heroes have done, whom prophets have foretold and *Gazettes* celebrated—or who have foretold and celebrated themselves. Pray be content to be cooped up in an island that has no neighbours, when the Howes and Clintons and Dunmores and Burgoynes and Campbells are not yet got beyond the great river—Inquiry²! To-day's papers say that the *little* Prince of Orange is to invade you again; but we trust Sir James Wallace³ has clipped his wings so close, that they will not grow again this season, though he is so ready to *fly*.

Nothing material has happened since I wrote last—so, as every moment of a civil war is precious, every one has been turned to the interest of diversion. There have been three masquerades, an Installation, and the ball of the Knights at the Haymarket this week; not to mention Almack's festino, Lady Spencer's, Ranelagh and Vauxhall, operas and plays. The Duchess of Bolton too saw masks—

LETTER 1943.—¹ Mr. Conway was now at his government, Jersey. *Walpole*.

² The Parliamentary inquiry which took place in the House of Commons on the conduct of the American

War. *Walpole*.

³ Admiral Sir James Wallace, Knight (1731–1803), who had destroyed the vessels assembled in a bay on the coast of Normandy with a view to a renewed attack on Jersey.

so many, that the floor gave way, and the company in the dining-room were near falling on the heads of those in the parlour, and exhibiting all that has not yet appeared in Doctors' Commons. At the Knights' ball was such a profusion of strawberries, that people could hardly get into the supper-room. I could tell you more, but I do not love to exaggerate.

Lady Ailesbury told me this morning that Lord Bristol has got a calf with two feet to each leg: I am convinced it is by the Duchess of Kingston, who has two of everything where others have but one. Adieu! I am going to sup with Mrs. Abington, and hope Mrs. Clive will not hear of it.

Yours ever,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1944. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Arlington Street, May 29, 1779.

I HAVE two letters from you unanswered of the 4th and 15th of this month. I begin to reply to them; though I believe my response will not set out before June for want of corporality. The best news I know is what you tell me of the Spanish monarch's resolution of remaining neuter. We seem able to cope with France, who makes war in our own piddling style. We both fish for islets that used to escape through the meshes of former military drag-nets. Some attempt on Ireland we expect; I hope the Prince of Nassau will command it. All this last week we were whispered ministerially into a belief of Byron having demolished, taken, and killed D'Estaing and all his squadron. Some doubted whether it was not an artifice to fill the loan; and so it has proved. The two admirals looked at one another, but did not hurt a pendant of each other's

head. The House of Commons sits from day to day, examining into the conduct of all the other generals and admirals that have been looking at the Americans and French for these five years, and of the ministers who sent them to look the colonies into unlimited submission. Future historians will have a brave collection of papers to revel in.

You shall certainly have my tragedy¹ when your nephew returns; but I doubt it will shock more than please you, for nothing can be more disgusting than the subject. I approve and exhort you not to preach to your nephew. Wait till you see him, and then you can instil your sentiments by degrees. As he has already corrected many effervescences, I trust to his good sense and good heart for his still improving; but, believe me, there must be a very solid fund to resist the depravation of this country. It is lost, it is distracted. It sinks every day, and yet its extravagance and dissipation rather augment than subside. Though we have danced like Bacchanals all the winter, there is a new subscription on foot for a sumptuous ball at the Pantheon. We are like the Israelites that capered round the golden calf, though they were to fight their way out of the desert. I check my hand; it is grievous to condemn one's country! I ask myself, if I am not grown old and splenetic; but, alas, America lost, credit supported by gross falsehoods, all comfort hanging on a King of Spain's mood: one had need be very young to dance without reflection!

May 31st.

I must finish my letter to-night, for I go out of town to-morrow for the summer, and leave the Parliament to give balls or supplies as it pleases. Lord Cornwallis sails to-day to command America, but the fleet is not yet gone.

LETTER 1944.—¹ *The Mysterious Mother*. Walpole.

I remember, when I was a boy, hearing that it had been a great joke in Queen Anne's war, that Lord Peterborough was galloping about in Spain inquiring for his army—Lord Cornwallis will have none to hunt for.

The old Duke of Rutland is dead, at eighty-four. I think he had been Knight of the Garter above fifty years.

The Irish do not grow into better humour—I know nothing that is improved but our climate—so I hope we shall preserve *this part* of the island at least.

P.S. Do not expect me to be so assiduous in summer, as I have been of late; nay, you may wish I should have no occasion to be so.

1945. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, June 2, 1779.

I AM most sincerely rejoiced, dear Sir, that you find yourself at all better, and trust it is an omen of farther amendment. Mr. Essex surprised me by telling me, that you, who keep yourself so warm and so numerously clothed, do yet sometimes, if the sun shines, sit and write in your garden for hours at a time. It is more than I should readily do, whose habitudes are so very different from yours. Your complaints seem to demand perspiration—but I do not venture to advise. I understand no constitution but my own, and should kill Milo, if I managed him as I treat myself. I sat in a window on Saturday, with the east wind blowing in my neck till near two in the morning—and it seems to have done me good, for I am better within these two days than I have been these six months. My spirits have been depressed, and my nerves so aspen, that the smallest noise disturbed me. To-day I do not feel a complaint, which is something at near sixty-two.

I don't know whether I have not misinformed you, nor am sure it was Dr. Ducarel who translated the account of the Abbey of Beck—he gave it to Mr. Lort, but I am not certain he ever published it. You was the first that notified to me the fifth volume of the *Archæologia*. I am not much more edified than usual; but there are three pretty prints of reginal seals. Mr. Pegge's¹ tedious dissertation, which he calls a brief one, about the foolish legend of St. George, is despicable. All his arguments are equally good for proving the existence of the dragon.

What diversion might laughter make of the Society! Dolly Pentraeth, the old woman of Mousehole, and Mr. Penneck's nurse, v. p. 81, would have furnished Foote with two personages for a farce. The same grave Judge's² dissertation on patriarchal customs seems to have as much to do with British antiquities, as the Lapland witches, that sell wind—and pray what business has the Society with Roman inscriptions in Dalmatia? I am most pleased with the account of Nonsuch, imperfect as it is. It appears to have been but a villa, and not considerable for a royal one. You see, lilacs were then a novelty.—Well, I am glad they publish away. The vanity of figuring in these repositories will make many persons contribute their MSS., and every now and then something valuable will come to light, which its own intrinsic merit might not have saved.

I know nothing more of Houghton. I should certainly be glad to have the priced catalogue; and if you will lend me yours, my printer shall transcribe it—but I am in no hurry. I conceive faint hopes, as the sale is not concluded—however, I take care not to flatter myself.

I think I told you I had purchased, at Mr. Ives's sale, a handsome coat in painted glass, of Hobart impaling

LETTER 1945.—¹ Rev. Samuel Pegge (1704–1796).

² Hon. Daines Barrington.

Boleyn—but I can find no such match in the pedigree—yet I have heard that Blickling belonged to Anne Boleyn's father. Pray reconcile all this to me.

Lord de Ferrers is to dine here on Saturday; and I have got to treat him an account of ancient paintings, formerly in the hall of Tamworth Castle; they are mentioned in Warton's *Observations on the Fairy Queen*, vol. i. p. 43.

Do not put yourself to pain to answer this. Only be assured that I shall be happy to know when you are able to write with ease. You must leave your cloister, if your transcribability leaves you.

1946. TO DR. LORT.

Strawberry Hill, June 4, 1779.

I AM sorry, dear Sir, you could not let me have the pleasure of your company: but, I own, you have partly, not entirely, made me amends by the sight of the curious manuscript, which I return you, with your other book of Inaugurations.

The sight of the manuscript was particularly welcome to me, because the long visit of Henry VI and his uncle Gloucester to St. Edmund's Bury accounts for those rare altar tablets that I bought at Mr. Ives's sale, on which are incontestably the portraits of Duke Humphrey, Cardinal Beaufort, and the same archbishop that is in my marriage of Henry VI. I know the house of Lancaster were patrons of St. Edmund's Bury; but so long a visit is demonstration.

The fourth person on my panels is unknown. Over his head is a coat of arms. It may be that of W. Curteys the abbot—or the alderman, as he is in scarlet. His figure, and the Duke's, are far superior to the other two, and worthy of a good Italian master. The Cardinal and the Archbishop are in the dry hard manner of the age. I wish you would

call and look at them: they are at Mr. Bonus's in Oxford Road: the two prelates are much damaged. I peremptorily enjoined Bonus to repair only, and not repaint them; and thus, by putting him out of his way, I put him so much out of humour too, that he has kept them these two years, and not finished them yet. I design them for the four void spaces in my chapel, on the sides of the shrine. The Duke of Gloucester's face is so like, though younger, that it proves I guessed right at his figure in my 'Marriage.' The tablets came out of the Abbey of Bury, were procured by old Peter Le Neve, Norroy, and came by his widow's marriage to Tom Martin, at whose sale Mr. Ives bought them. We have very few princely portraits so ancient, so authentic, and none so well painted as the Duke and fourth person. These were the insides of the doors, which I had split into two, and value them extremely. This account, I think, will be more satisfactory to you than notes.

Pray tell me how you like the pictures when you have examined them. I shall search in Edmondson's new Vocabulary of Arms for the coat, which contains three bulls' heads on six pieces; but the colours are either white and black, or the latter is become so by time. I hope you are not going out of town yet; I shall probably be there some day in next week.

I see advertised a book something in the way of your Inaugurations, called *Le Costume*; do you know anything of it? Can you tell me who is the author of the *Second Anticipation* on the Exhibition? Is it not Barry the painter?

Your much obliged,

HOR. WALPOLE.

1947. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday, June 5, 1779.

I WRITE to you more seldom than I am disposed to do, from having nothing positive to tell you, and from being unwilling to say and unsay every minute something that is reported positively. The confident assertions of the victory over D'Estaing are totally vanished; and they who invented them now declaim as bitterly against Byron, as if he had deceived them—as they did against Keppel. This day se'nnight there was a great alarm about Ireland; which was far from being all invention, though not an absolute insurrection, as was said. The case, I believe, was this:—The court, in order to break the volunteer army established by the Irish themselves, endeavoured to persuade a body in Lady Blayney's county of Monaghan to enlist in the militia—which they took indignantly. They said they had great regard for Lady Blayney¹ and Lord Clermont; but to act under them would be acting under the King, and that was by no means their intention. There have since been motions for inquiries what steps the ministers have taken to satisfy the Irish—and these they have imprudently rejected—which will not tend to pacification. The ministers have been pushed, too, on the article of Spain, and could not deny that all negotiation is at an end—though they will not own farther. However, the Spanish Ambassador is much out of humour. From Paris they write confidently of the approaching declaration; and Lord Sandwich, I hear, has said in a very mixed company, that it was folly not to expect it. There is another million asked and given on a vote of

LETTER 1947.—¹ Mary (d. 1790), daughter and heir of Sir Alexander Cairnes, Baronet; m. (1) Cadwallader

Blayney, seventh Baron Blayney; (2) Colonel John Murray. Lord Clermont was her son-in-law.

credit; and Lord North has boasted of such mines for next year, that one would think he believed next year would never come.

The inquiry² goes on, and Lord Harrington³ did himself and Burgoyne honour. Barré and Governor Johnstone have had warm words, and Burke has been as frantic for the Roman Catholics as Lord George Gordon against them. The Parliament, it is said, is to rise on the 21st.

You will not collect from all this that our prospect clears up. I fear there is not more discretion in the treatment of Ireland than of America. The court seems to be infatuated, and to think that nothing is of any consequence but a majority in Parliament—though they have totally lost all power but that of provoking. Fortunate it had been for the King and kingdom, had the court had no majority for these six years! America had still been ours!—and all the lives and all the millions we have squandered! A majority that has lost thirteen provinces by bullying and vapouring, and the most childish menaces, will be a brave countermatch for France and Spain, and a rebellion in Ireland! In short, it is plain that there is nothing a majority in Parliament can do, but outvote a minority; and yet by their own accounts one would think they could not do even that. I saw a paper t'other day that began with this Iricism, 'As the minority have lost us thirteen provinces,' &c. I know nothing the minority have done, or been suffered to do, but restore the Roman Catholic religion—and that too was by the desire of the court.

This is, however, the present style. They announced with infinite applause a new production of Tickell:—it has appeared, and is a most paltry performance. It is called the

² Into the conduct of the American War. *Walpole*.

³ Charles Stanhope, third Earl of

Harrington. He had been Aide-de-Camp to Burgoyne.

Cassette Verte of M. de Sartine, and pretends to be his correspondence with the opposition. Nay, they are so pitifully mean as to laugh at Dr. Franklin, who has such thorough reason to sit and laugh at them. What triumph it must be to him to see a miserable pamphlet all the revenge they can take! There is another, still duller, called *Opposition Mornings*, in which you are lugged in. In truth, it is a compliment to any man to except him out of the number of those that have contributed to the shocking disgraces inflicted on this undone country! When Lord Chatham was minister, he never replied to abuse but by a victory.

I know no private news: I have been here ever since Tuesday, enjoying my tranquillity, as much as an honest man can do who sees his country ruined. It is just such a period as makes philosophy wisdom. There are great moments when every man is called on to exert himself—but when folly, infatuation, delusion, incapacity, and profligacy fling a nation away, and it concurs itself, and applauds its destroyers, a man who has lent no hand to the mischief, and can neither prevent nor remedy the mass of evils, is fully justified in sitting aloof and beholding the tempest rage, with silent scorn and indignant compassion. Nay, I have, I own, some comfortable reflections. I rejoice that there is still a great continent of Englishmen who will remain free and independent, and who laugh at the impotent majorities of a prostitute Parliament. I care not whether General Burgoyne and Governor Johnstone cross over and figure in, and support or oppose; nor whether Mr. Burke, or the Superior of the Jesuits, is High Commissioner to the Kirk of Scotland. My ideas are such as I have always had, and are too plain and simple to comprehend modern confusions; and, therefore, they suit with those of few men. What will be the issue of this chaos, I know not, and probably shall not see. I do see with satisfaction, *that what*

was meditated has failed by the grossest folly; and when one has escaped the worst, lesser evils must be endured with patience.

After this dull effusion, I will divert you with a story that made me laugh this morning till I cried. You know my Swiss, David, and his incomprehensible pronunciation. He came to me, and said, 'Auh! dar is Meses Ellis wants some of your large flags to put in her great O.' With much ado, I found out that Mrs. Ellis had sent for leave to take up some flags out of my meadow for her grotto.

I hope in a few days to see Lady Ailesbury and Miss Jennings here; I have writ to propose it. What are your intentions? Do you stay till you have made your island impregnable? I doubt it will be our only one that will be so.

1948. TO THE HON. HENRY SEYMOUR CONWAY.

Strawberry Hill, June 16, 1779.

YOUR Countess was here last Thursday, and received a letter from you, that told us how slowly you receive ours. When you will receive this I cannot guess; but it dates a new era, which you with reason did not care to look at as possible. In a word, behold a Spanish war! I must detail a little to increase your wonder. I heard here the day before yesterday that it was likely; and that night received a letter from Paris, telling me (it was of the 6th) that Monsieur de Beauveau was going, they knew not whither, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, with three lieutenant-generals and six or eight *maréchaux-de-camp* under him. Yesterday I went to town, and Thomas Walpole happened to call on me. He, who used to be informed early, did not believe a word either of a Spanish war or a French expedition. I saw some other persons in the evening as ignorant.

At night I went to sup at Richmond House. The Duke said the Brest fleet was certainly sailed, and had got the start of ours by twelve days; that Monsieur de Beauveau was on board with a large sum of money, and with white and *red* cockades; and that there would certainly be a Spanish war. He added that the opposition were then pressing in the House of Commons to have the Parliament continue sitting, and urging to know if we were not at the eve of a Spanish war; but the ministers persisted in the prorogation for to-morrow or Friday, and would not answer on Spain.

I said I would make you wonder. But no; why should the Parliament continue to sit? Are not the ministers and the Parliament the same thing? And how has either House shown that it has any talent for war?

The Duke of Richmond does not guess whither the Brest fleet is gone. He thinks, if to Ireland, we should have known it by this time. He has heard that the Prince of Beauveau has said he was going on an expedition that would be glorious in the eyes of posterity. I asked if that might not mean Gibraltar? The Duke doubts, but hopes it, as he thinks it no wise measure on their side; yet he was very melancholy, as you will be, on this heavy accession to our distresses.

Well! here we are, *aris et focis* and all at stake! What can we be meaning? Unable to conquer America before she was assisted—scarce able to keep France at bay—are we a match for both, and Spain too? What can be our view? nay, what can be our expectation? I sometimes think we reckon it will be more creditable to be forced by France and Spain to give up America, than to have the merit with the latter of doing it with grace.—But, as Cato says,

I'm weary of conjectures—this must end them;
that is, the sword:—and never, I believe, did a country

plunge itself into such difficulties step by step, and for six years together, without once recollecting that each foreign war rendered the object of the civil war more unattainable; and that in both the foreign wars we have not an object in prospect. Unable to recruit our remnant of an army in America, are we to make conquests on France and Spain? They may choose their attacks: we can scarce choose what we will defend.

Ireland, they say, is more temperate than was expected. That is some consolation—yet many fear the Irish will be tempted to unite with America, which would throw all that trade into their convenient harbours: and I own I have apprehensions that the Parliament's rising without taking a step in their favour may offend them. Surely at least we have courageous ministers. I thought my father a stout man:—he had not a tithe of their spirit.

The town has wound up the season perfectly in character by a fête at the Pantheon by subscription. Le Texier managed it; but it turned out sadly. The company was first shut into the galleries to look down on the supper, then let to descend to it. Afterwards they were led into the subterraneous apartment, which was laid with mould, and planted with trees, and crammed with nosegays: but the fresh earth, and the dead leaves, and the effluvia of breaths made such a stench and moisture, that they were suffocated; and when they remounted, the legs and wings of chickens and remnants of ham (for the supper was not removed) poisoned them more. A Druid in an arbour distributed verses to the ladies; then the Baccelli and the dancers of the Opera danced; and then danced the company; and then it being morning, and the candles burnt out, the windows were opened; and then the stewed-danced assembly were such shocking figures, that they fled like ghosts as they looked.—I suppose there will be no more balls unless



*Benjamin Franklin
from a medallion by J. P. Vini.*

Walker & Cocherell Ph. S.

the French land, and then we shall show we do not mind it.

Thus I have told you all I know. You will ponder over these things in your little distant island, when we have forgotten them. There is another person, one Dr. Franklin, who, I fancy, is not sorry that we divert ourselves so well.

1949. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 16, 1779.

ALAS! my dear Sir, you have been mistaken, and must no more put your trust in the obstinacy of princes: at least, that of one can surmount that of another. The King of Spain's rescript is arrived and delivered, and the Brest fleet is sailed with both white and red cockades. The declaration is said not to be very injurious; but, after all possible endeavours at pacification, his Catholic Majesty is obliged to take his part, especially as we have made some captures on his subjects. The ministers were urged even late last night on the hostility of Spain, but would own nothing. This morning they avow everything; and, to your great surprise probably, the Parliament is to rise to-morrow or next day! As events have not proved the wisdom of measures, one can collect no great confidence from such a step: but I don't pretend to reason on what I do not understand; my business is to tell you facts. In short, the Brest fleet has been sailed many days. The Prince of Beauvau is on board¹—if destined for Ireland, we should probably have heard it by this time; if to meet the Spanish fleet, the object may be Gibraltar.

I shall not boast of having been a better soothsayer than you, when I foretold that the American war would not be of short duration. It is a trist honour to be verified a

LETTER 1949.—¹ He did not go. *Walpole*.

prophet of woes. Were I vain of the character, a Spanish war, added to an American and to a French one, were a fine field ; but I do not ambition being a Jeremiah, though my countrymen are so like the Jews. Nor does it require inspiration to prophesy, when one has nothing to do but to calculate. Were you here, you would not be alarmed. You would see no panic ; you would hear of nothing but diversions. The ministers affirm the majority of America is with us, and it is credited. Were they to tell us half the Spanish fleet would come over to us, it would be credited too. When it does not, perhaps they will tell us it has.—Well ! what is most to be dreaded is the dissipation of our delusion. When the *reveil* comes, it will be serious indeed !

You see I am not likely to be barren of matter, and you will be sorry that I write oftener than I foresaw. The middle period of our correspondence was the most agreeable. Its early part was the journal of a civil war, and of no glorious one in Flanders. Fifteen years after, I sent you victory upon victory, and conquest upon conquest. For the last five years, my letters have been the records of a mouldering empire. What is now to come I know not : we have, they say, maintained ourselves against France and Spain ; true, but with the trifling difference of having America in our scale—now it is in theirs. We had too a Lord Chatham ; who does not seem to have been replaced.

I tell you nothing of Parliamentary debates, for I really do not attend to them ; especially not to the details of the war, and the conduct of the generals, who have made a very silly figure. There are far mightier objects in question than speeches and votes, and which I *must* learn even here, quiet and abstracted as I sit. My consolation is that I have no particular friend responsible for anything that has happened ; and, when one's passions are not concerned, an individual of my age must have learnt to look

on the great drama of the world with some indifference. My pride, I own, made me pleased when my country was the most splendid in Europe: I did not imagine I was so singular as I find I was, or we should not have run wild after a phantom of absolute power over a country whose liberty was the source of our greatness. A pretty experiment we have made; and, whenever the hour of peace shall arrive, we shall be able to compute what it has cost us *not* to compass it.

Methinks, if the accounts of all wars were to be stated, it would be worth ambition's while to examine the sum total, and calculate whether the object aimed at is not ten thousand times too dear. I doubt I must not propose examining beyond the mere *cash* account. The lives, alas! go for nothing. We have sent fifty thousand men to America, and recruits! How many will ever return? And where are all the children that would have been begotten in six years of peace? Oh, and now here is a new account to be opened!

These would be called at present the gloomy speculations of a solitary man. Posterity would think there was some sense in them—and yet posterity will perhaps be as foolish on some other point. We condemn the wars of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, and do not conceive what they quarrelled about; yet we, who are at war with France and Spain because we would not be content to let America send us half the wealth of the world in its own way, shall not be deemed very wise hereafter. We not only killed the hen that laid a golden egg every day, but must defend the very shop at home where we sold our eggs.—I have nothing more to say, and three parts of England do not yet think there is a word of sense in what I have said: France and Spain know there is; but I shall not canvass for their approbation.

1950. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

DEAR SIR,

Strawberry Hill, June 19, 1779.

I cannot persuade my cousin, Mr. Thomas Walpole, that his request would be sufficient to recommend to your kindest protection Mr. Edmund Turnor, a friend of his son. I have told him, and he knows, how obliging you are to all English, and that his name would double your attention. Still he will insist on my joining in the application. I do it with the greatest pleasure, and love young Mr. Walpole so much, and am so sure that a friend of his must be a valuable young man, that I boldly venture to assure you that your warmest civilities will be well bestowed. My young cousin is so amiable that it will be obliging me very particularly to oblige his friend; and I never doubt your seizing any opportunity of pleasing

Your very affectionate friend

and obedient servant,

H. W.

1951. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Strawberry Hill, June 22, 1779.

YOUR Ladyship's reproaches would be very just, if my pleas of excuse were not too valid. I have been in town but one half day since I had the honour of seeing you; and my own pastime is too insipid to send you. I have a more weighty apology too to urge, which increases every day, and which I will give you in the moving words of one, almost my contemporary, Dan Lydgate, who in his last piece complains of his trembling joints, and declares that age

LETTER 1950.—Not in C.; now first printed from transcript in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

having benumbed his faculties, had deprived him of *all the subtiltè of curious making in Englysshe to endyte.*

You will think me torpid indeed, Madam, when I tell you that I have not set my foot in London ever since the delivery of the Spanish Ambassador's sour rescript.

In truth, I concluded the eruption of a third war would call Lord Ossory to town ; and then I knew your Ladyship would have more authentic intelligence than I could send you by rebound.

The ruin of my country is certainly no matter of joy to me. Perhaps I have long thought it undone ; and then one may be allowed to prefer one mode to another. A nation cannot perish entirely. Foreign enemies seldom destroy a country, and then only by total conquest. In my opinion the subversion of a happy constitution, which is only effected by domestic enemies, is a worse evil, certainly a more permanent and more mortifying one, than defeats by strangers. If calamities restore the spirit of our constitution, which had exalted us from a little trading island to the rank of a great empire, we may be a mighty people once more ; for it is liberty alone, not titular authority and prerogative, that can aggrandize small countries. If we will be emperors, it will be without empire. The majesty of the people of England was no joke—for they maintained their dignity ; but a Grand Signior of this diminutive islet, without its trade, which is never an appendage of despotism, would be crushed amidst the real potentates that now exist in Europe ; and two of their Majesties seem to think the hour is come for sweeping us from the roll of monarchs.

These are not professions, but have always been my opinions, Madam. I think the national character lost, or we should not be where we are at this moment, trusting to precedents of former miracles for preservation ; but miracles

are not such matters of chance, as to contradict calculation. Only Turks believe that fools are inspired. If Providence interposes its Omnipotence in politics, at least it selects wise men for its agents; or if not wise men, a genius. I sit here, waiting till the star appears that is to conduct those sages. I know not from what quarter, east, west, or south, they are to come. I am sure they have not set out from the north. My utmost wish, not my expectance, is to live to see my country escape tolerably from this menacing darkness. I am too inconsiderable to give advice, and too old to contribute anything else; and therefore sit silently here awaiting the working of the tempest: shipwreck or miracles are soon learnt anywhere.

I have wandered beyond my intention, but you set my pen a prating, though I have told it I will have it hold its tongue. My private story is very brief. My health is much better for quiet and total idleness, and my fevers gone. Lady Aylesbury and Lady William Campbell passed one night here, and last week the Duke of Richmond and the Duchess of Leinster dined with me. On Friday I dined at Princess Amelie's, and was so unfortunate, to my confusion, as to arrive after she was set down to table, but as her Royal Highness had a great cold, I took occasion to go and inquire after her the next day, and made my submission. There were the Duchess of Bedford, their Ladyships Aylesbury, Holderness, Mary Coke, Margaret Compton, Anne Howard, Betty Delmé¹, Mrs. Howe, Lords Hertford and Dillon, Lords Pelham and Edgcumbe, and their wives, and Mr. Morrice, who looked dreadfully ill indeed.

I hear Lord Carlisle has resigned², and conjecture why; and that Lord Shelburne is going to be married—perhaps

LETTER 1951.—¹ Lady Elizabeth Howard (d. 1813), third daughter of fourth Earl of Carlisle by his second wife; m. (1) Peter Delmé; (2) Captain

Garnier.

² He resigned his post as Treasurer of the Household in July 1779, when he was appointed Lord Steward.

your Ladyship knows to whom : unless you tell me to the contrary, I shall be very glad.

Shall I make you smile, Madam, in this ugly hour ? You know my Swiss David's solemnity and uncouth pronunciation, which he thinks perfect. He came into my room t'other day very composedly, and dangling his arms said, 'Auh ! dar is Meses Ellis want some of your large flags to put in her great O.'—I cried, 'What !' though I could scarce question him for laughing. At last with much ado I discovered that Mrs. Ellis's wants lay in her grotto.

That beautiful spot, Mr. Hindley's³, is to be sold by auction next Monday. I hear Mrs. Coke⁴, the mother of him of Norfolk, intends to be the purchaser—and I hope so : for I do not know her, which is a good circumstance in a next neighbourhood ; and a dowager is a quiet sort of neighbour, and don't keep hounds. I pray for the peace of my little Jerusalem, since I have long been cured of having any other object.

Wednesday noon.

I had sealed my letter for the post, when I received your Ladyship's second, for which I give you a million of thanks. I am delighted with the confirmation of Lady Louisa's⁵ match. My acquaintance with Lord Shelburne is very slight ; but two essential points are gospel, that he is a man of sense, and that he made an excellent husband to a wife far inferior to Lady Louisa in beauty. There is a third, which though negative, I reckon a capital merit at present, he is not a gamester.

George Selwyn is suddenly returned, and as Lord Ossory is in town too, I think I shall go to town to-morrow.

³ A former steward of the last Earl of Radnor of the Robarts family, who left him his house and furniture at Twickenham.

⁴ Elizabeth, daughter of George

Denton, and widow of Wenman Coke (formerly Roberts), of Longford, Derbyshire.

⁵ Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick.

1952. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1779.

THIS letter will be of very ancient date when you receive it, and not have one very near it perhaps when it sets out. Your nephew called here two days ago, just as I was going to town on business, and told me, to my joy on your account, that he was going in a fortnight to make you another short visit—a very meritorious one when the journey is so long. He has promised to come and dine here *tête à tête* before he goes ; but, lest he should surprise me, I prepare this, which therefore shall not contain news that would be antiquated, but give you as just a picture as I can in few words of our situation and prospect, and as impartial one as I can, considering my indignation at the ruin brought upon my country by both as worthless and incapable a set of men as ever had the front to call themselves politicians. They have hurried us, and then blundered us, into a civil war, a French war, a Spanish war. America is lost ; Jamaica, the West Indian islands, Gibraltar, and Port Mahon, are scarce to be saved ; Ireland is in great danger, either from invasion or provocation.

Of this country I should have little fear, if men who have conducted themselves so wretchedly were not still our governors ! We are at this instant expecting a sea-battle between our fleet and the united one of France and Spain ; in which, if the latter, who are the stronger by a matter of nine ships, have the decided advantage, we conclude they will pour in troops, considerably into Ireland,—here probably in less detachments, to distract us. The nation is not so much alarmed as might be expected. What is infinitely more astonishing is, that the Spanish war, on which the ministers lulled the country asleep even *till*

two days before the declaration, has not excited general, scarce any, indignation against the criminals. In short, the court, aided by the Tories and clergy, the worst Tories, have infatuated the nation; and though the opposition have yearly, daily, hourly, laboured to prevent, and foretold every individual step that has happened, the money of the Treasury, the industry of the Scotch, and the rancour of the Tories have persuaded the majority of the people that the opposition have almost conjured up the storm; though they have not been strong enough to carry a single question, have deprecated every measure pursued, and have had every one of their prophecies verified.—I, who affirm all this, and appeal to facts, am still not partial to the opposition. So far from thinking they have gone too far, I know they have been too inert, and, early at least in the American war, might have stemmed some of the torrent. Yet I will do them justice,—the fairness of their characters checked them; a less conscientious opposition might have saved the nation.

In this predicament then we stand; a good man scarce knows what to wish. New misfortunes would level us to the dust. Success in such hands as we are in would blow them up to the acme of insolence; and, as the whole scope of all our errors was despotism, it is greatly to be feared that, with the loss of our outlying dominions, our trade, influence, and credit, we might lose our freedom too.

There is the true secret. Prerogative has been whispered into the nation's ear, and taken root. The Tories scruple not to call for it. The ministers, worthless and incapable wretches, and ill-connected with each other, and cohering but from common danger, have little or no credit with their master; and, no one being predominant, no particular odium rests on any one. Thus, though I am persuaded almost every one condemns the measures he promotes, and

must have foreseen the precipice, not one has had the honest courage to withstand the Spanish war; which I firmly believe was by no means the Spanish King's intention, but turned solely on the refusal of the closet to relinquish American dependence. Everything has been risked rather than waive prerogative; and so abandoned are the higher orders, that, for the emolument of salaries, they have staked their children and the future security of their estates!

Our late prodigious wealth, and our dissipation, have concurred to facilitate this delusion. We have excellent orators both in the administration and opposition, but no great man; and few, very few, virtuous men, even in the latter; who, though impudently charged still with acting from interested motives, have over and over rejected every offer of advantage. I mean, personally. Anything would have been granted to divide them. You will say good sense, not integrity, checked their acceptance. Perhaps so: yet as the court would never have changed its system, nor would part with the lead, it is plain the opposition did not attend to individual lucre, as every minister had been gained by it. I believe that neither Lord Rockingham nor Lord Shelburne would be content without being First Minister; but honesty must have been the motive of the rest.

This, though short, is a comprehensive abstract of my ideas on our situation. I cannot precisely say what I wish; because I cannot decide between contradictions, nor can expect that miracles should *dovetail* themselves in such a manner, as, by intersecting one another, to form a compact establishment that I should like. Thus my fears and hopes are suspended, and I sit with folded arms waiting events. It would be idle and impertinent to say this but to you, my dear Sir, who wish to know my opinion, when

I could speak it fairly and truly. I have done so most religiously; I firmly believe every tittle I have uttered. Never have I deceived you knowingly. I mean, when I have written by a safe hand—by the post, one colours over some things, even because one's letters may be opened by foreign enemies; but I have ever been rather too frank for my own interest, and have never talked seriously contrary to my opinion, though I may not have uttered it fully. I wish you to return me this letter by your nephew: it is too explicit to be exposed to any hazard of publication, and is impartial enough to please no set of men upon earth.

Pray send me back by your nephew what other letters, too, you have of mine. On perusing the whole series, I can safely repeat, that, as far as I knew at the time, I have never given you false information, nor acted sentiments which you afterwards found had not been mine; but, as my life has been uniform to its first and only principles, it was not likely that I should go farther than being prudent (not the colour of my character), and, had I talked differently, my conduct at the very time would have contradicted my assertions.

1953. TO GEORGE HARDINGE.

Strawberry Hill, July 4, 1779.

I HAVE now received the drawings of Grignan, and know not how to express my satisfaction and gratitude but by a silly witticism that is like the studied quaintness of the last age. In short, they are so much more beautiful than I expected, that I am *not* surprised at *your* having surprised me by exceeding even what I expected from your well-known kindness to me.

They are charmingly executed, and with great taste. I own too that Grignan is grander, and in a much finer

situation, than I had imagined; as I concluded that the witchery of Madame de Sévigné's ideas and style had spread the same leaf-gold over *places* with which she gilded her *friends*.

All that has appeared of *them* since the publication of her letters has lowered them. A single letter of her daughter, that to Paulina¹, with a description of the Duchess of Bourbon's toilette, is worthy of the mother. Paulina's own letters contain not a tittle worth reading; one just divines that she might have written well if she had had anything to write about (which, however, would not have signified to her grandmother).

Coulanges was a silly good-humoured glutton, that flattered a rich widow for her dinners. His wife was sensible, but dry, and rather peevish at growing old. Unluckily nothing more has come to light of Madame de Sévigné's son, whose short letters in the collection I am almost *profane* enough to prefer to his mother's; and which makes me astonished that she did not love his wit, so unaffected, and so congenial to her own, in preference to the eccentric and sophisticated reveries of her sublime and ill-humoured daughter. Grignan alone maintains its dignity, and shall be consecrated here among other monuments of that bewitching period, and amongst which one loves to lose oneself, and drink oblivion of an era so very unlike; for the awkward bigots to despotism of our time have not Madame de Sévigné's address, nor can paint an Indian idol with an hundred hands as graceful as the Apollo of the Belvidere.

When will you come and accept my thanks? Will Wednesday next suit you? But do you know that I must ask you not to leave your gown behind you, which indeed

LETTER 1953.—¹ The Marquise de Simiane, grand-daughter of Madame de Sévigné.

I never knew you put on willingly, but to come in it. I shall want your protection at Westminster Hall against the Bishops², an odious race whether clerical or laic. You heard how infamously I had been treated by Colonel and by Ned Bishop. Oh, they could not be worse if they were in orders.

Yours most cordially,

H. WALPOLE.

1954. TO GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN.

Strawberry Hill, July 5, 1779.

I TAKE the liberty, which I know you will forgive me, my dear Sir, of troubling you with the enclosed, begging that you will add anything that is necessary to the direction,—as *par la Hollande*, or whatever else is requisite,—and to put it into the post as soon as you receive it. Pray tell me, too, what is necessary to the direction, and where my maid in town must put in my future letters to Paris, that I may not trouble you any more with them. I fear they will not go so safely and regularly as in the old way, which will vex our good old friend¹, who cannot bear to lose any of her stated occupations.

I have just received a present of four beautiful drawings of Grignan, which far exceed my ideas of its magnificence and charming situation. I had concluded that Madame de Sévigné, either from partiality or to please the Seigneur, had exaggerated its pomps and command. I long to show them to you and talk them over, and am glad to have anything new that may tempt you hither. Can you tell me if the Duchess of Leinster still goes to Aubigny; and, if she

² Horace Walpole had a lawsuit with the Bishops, in connection with his house in Berkeley Square.

of original in possession of the Duchess of St. Albans.

¹ Madame du Deffand.

LETTER 1954.—Collated with copy

does, when ; and if she is in London ? I shall be much obliged to you for a true account of Lord Bolingbroke. It is not common curiosity that makes me anxious, though not particularly interested about him, nor is he *the husband*² I most wish dead.

Yours most sincerely,
H. W.

1955. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Bedfordshire, July 6, 1779.

I SHOULD not have waited to owe you a letter, Madam, had I not had a substantial reason for silence. I had the gout in my foot for two days at the beginning of last week : it went off at once, but at night came into my left eye ; and remained there for four or five days. To what part Old Truepenny, like the ghost in *Hamlet*, will shift its quarters next, I cannot tell ; but I see it will never quit me till it makes a ghost of Horatio. In the meantime it lays such an embargo on me that I never dare engage myself, or promise anything that I am to perform personally, lest I seem capricious ; but I am so much worse company than usual, when I am not well, and struggle to hide it, that I determine never to bind myself for a minute but conditionally.

I have done talking politics, Madam, as I should if I lived at the foot of Vesuvius and the mountain grumbled. If the lava takes a contrary direction, and my cottage escapes, I will look about me and see what is left. How can you mind what passes in Parliament ? The vestry at

² The *husband* is doubtless Topham Beauclerk, who married Lord Bolingbroke's divorced wife. Lady Louisa Stuart, in a note on the Selwyn Correspondence, writes of him as follows :—' In the latter part of Mr. Beauclerk's life, the man of pleasure

grew morose and savage, and Lady Di had much to suffer from his temper ; so had his children, to whom he was a selfish tyrant without indulgence or affection.' (*Journal of Lady Mary Coke*, vol. ii. p. 212 n.)

Amphill is of as much consequence. Nothing happens there but contradictions. I observe the Speech gives the lie to all the late assertions of hopes in America, of which it speaks dolefully. I do not think your neighbour so much in the wrong in apprehending a rebellion if Lord North was turned out. The nation would be consequent in resenting it; in short, I believe I am really *Xo Ho*, a Chinese that comprehends nothing he sees or hears.

Pray let me know when you come to your wedding¹, that I may get a peep of you. Of weddings in my own tribe I am as tired as of politics and have put cotton into all my ears. Be the events of Empress Chance obeyed; nobody but her majesty has any decision. I leave everything to her, have abandoned all my principles, and am governed by nothing but *De par la Reine*.

George² I have seen. He embarked in an instant on receiving a warrant to carry off his prize, as if she had been the heiress of the Indies and he had feared a retractation. I did not ask to see her. Would you ask to see the moon, if Endymion told you he had married her?

Lord Bolingbroke, I hear, will live. At first they thought he had taken laudanum. It would have been a monstrous injustice in opium to kill him, when it will not dispatch Beauclerk.

In my neighbourhood there is no talk of the fleets. All we think of is the new tax on post-horses, which they say will produce more disturbances than the ballot for the militia would have done, and a million of broken heads.

I suppose that was the object (as it seems to be of all our measures), and that as the demand for plasters will be

LETTER 1955.—¹ The wedding of the Earl of Shelburne and Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick.

² George Selwyn. He had just returned from Paris, bringing Maria

Fagniani (the 'prize' mentioned by Walpole), who had been given over to him by the Marquis and Marchioness Fagniani.

infinitely increased, it may furnish pretext for a heavy gabel on diachylum. Adieu ! Madam, if we are digged out alive, when the conflagration is over, we will chat over old times. I do not desire to embark like Pliny, and probe the nature of earthquakes.

P.S. Harold, my venerable cat that was found on the Goodwin Sands, fifteen years ago or more, died last night in a good old age. I am not grieved, for I have not strength to have carried him out of Troy like Anchises on my shoulders.

1956. TO SIR HORACE MANN.

Strawberry Hill, July 7, 1779.

How much larger the war will be for the addition of Spain, I do not know. Hitherto it has produced no events but the shutting of our ports against France, and the junction of nine ships from Ferrol with the French squadron. They talk of a great navy getting ready at Cadiz, and of mighty preparations in the ports of France for an embarkation. As all this must have been foreseen, I suppose we are ready to resist all attacks.

The Parliament rose last Saturday, not without an open division in the ministry : Lord Gower, President of the Council, heading an opposition to a bill for doubling the militia, which had passed the Commons, and throwing it out ; which Lord North as publicly resented. I make no comments on this, because I really know nothing of the motives. Thoroughly convinced that all my ideas are superannuated, and too old to learn new lessons, I only hear what passes, pretend to understanding nothing, and wait patiently for events as they present themselves. I listen enough to be able to acquaint you with facts of

public notoriety; but attempt to explain none of them, if they do not carry legibility in the van.

Your nephew, who lives more in the world, and is coming to you, will be far more master of details. He called here some few days ago, as I was going out to dinner, but has kindly promised to come and dine here before he sets out. His journey is infinitely commendable, as entirely undertaken to please you. It will be very comfortable too, as surely the concourse of English must much abate, especially as France is interdicted. Travelling boys and self-sufficient governors would be an encumbrance to you, could you see more of your countrymen of more satisfactory conversation. Florence probably is improved since it had a court of its own, and there must be men a little more enlightened than the poor Italians. Scarce any of the latter that ever I knew but, if they had parts, were buffoons. I believe the boasted *finesse* of the ruling clergy is pretty much a traditionary notion, like their jealousy. More nations than one live on former characters after they are totally changed.

I have been often and much in France. In the provinces they may still be gay and lively; but at Paris, bating the pert *étourderie* of very young men, I protest I scarcely ever saw anything like vivacity—the Duc de Choiseul alone had more than any hundred Frenchmen I could select. Their women are the first in the world in everything but beauty; sensible, agreeable, and infinitely informed. The *philosophes*, except Buffon, are solemn, arrogant, dictatorial coxcombs—I need not say superlatively disagreeable. The rest are amazingly ignorant in general, and void of all conversation but the routine with women. My dear and very old friend is a relic of a better age, and at near eighty-four has all the impetuosity that *was* the character of the French. They have not found out, I believe, how much

their nation is sunk in Europe;—probably the Goths and Vandals of the North will open their eyes before a century is past. I speak of the swarming empires that have conglomerated within our memories. We dispelled the vision twenty years ago: but let us be modest till we do so again.

I just now receive two letters from you at once, which I suppose came by Mrs. Pitt's messenger, with Sir William Hamilton's assurances of the good disposition of the King of Spain: but they have proved as vain as the letters to the Grand-Duchess; yet I still think we might have kept him in temper if we had so pleased.

9th.

The Duke of Ancaster¹ is dead of a scarlet fever contracted by drinking and rioting, at two-and-twenty. He was in love with my niece Lady Horatia, the Duchess's third daughter, and I believe intended to marry her. She is a beautiful girl, like her mother, though not of so sublime a style of beauty. I much doubt whether she would have been happy with him; for, though he had some excellent qualities, he was of a turbulent nature, and, though of a fine figure, his manners were not noble. Fortune seems to have removed him, to complete her magnificent bounties to one family. Do you remember old Peter Burrell, who was attached to my father? His eldest grand-daughter is married to a Mr. Bennet², a man of large estate; the second, to Lord Algernon Percy; the third, to Lord Percy; and the youngest, the only one at all pretty, to Duke Hamilton. Lady Priscilla Elizabeth Bertie, eldest sister of the Duke of Ancaster, fell in love with, and would marry, their brother, not at all at his desire; but her father had entailed his whole estate on his two daughters,

LETTER 1956. — ¹ Robert Bertie (1756–1778), fourth Duke of Ancaster.

² Richard Henry Alexander Bennet, of Babraham, Cambridgeshire.

after his son, to the total disinherison of his brother Lord Brownlowe³, the present Duke;—and the grandson of Peter Burrell, a broken merchant, is husband of the Lady Great Chamberlain of England, with a barony and half the Ancaster estate. Old Madam Peter is living, to behold all this deluge of wealth and honours on her race. The Duchesses of Ancaster have not been less singular. The three last were never sober. The present Duchess-Dowager was natural daughter of Panton, a disreputable horse-jockey of Newmarket; and the new Duchess⁴ was some lady's woman, or young lady's governess. Fortune was in her most jocular moods when she made all these matches, or had a mind to torment the Heralds' Office.

11th.

Last night I received from town the medal you promised me on the Moorish alliance⁵. It is at least as magnificent as the occasion required, and yet not well executed. The medallist Siriez⁶, I conclude, is grandson of my old acquaintance Louis Siriez of the Palazzo Vecchio.

Yesterday's *Gazette* issued a proclamation on the expected invasion from Havre, where they are embarking mightily. Some think the attempt will be on Portsmouth. To sweeten this pill, Clinton has taken a fort and seventy men—not near Portsmouth, but New York; and there were reports at the latter that Charleston is likely to surrender. This would be something, if there were not a French war and a Spanish war in the way between us and Carolina. Sir Charles Hardy⁷ is at Torbay with the

³ Lord Brownlow Bertie (1729-1809), fifth Duke of Ancaster, third son of second Duke of Ancaster.

⁴ Mary Anne (d. 1804), daughter of Major Peter Layard; m. (1769), as his second wife, Lord Brownlow Bertie, afterwards Duke of Ancaster.

⁵ Between the Great Duke of Tus-

cany and the Emperor of Morocco. *Walpole*.

⁶ A French silversmith settled at Florence. *Walpole*.

⁷ Admiral Sir Charles Hardy, Knight (d. 1780), at this time in command of the Channel fleet.

whole fleet, which perhaps was not part of the plan at Havre: we shall see, and you shall hear, if anything passes.

Friday night, July 16th.

Your nephew has sent me word that he will breakfast with me to-morrow, but shall not have time to dine. I have nothing to add to the foregoing general picture. We have been bidden even by proclamation to expect an invasion, and troops and provisions have for this week been said to be embarked. Still I do not much expect a serious descent. The French, I think, have better chances with less risk. They may ruin us in detail. The fleet is at present at home or very near, and very strong; nor do I think that the French plan is activity:—but it is idle to talk of the present moment, when it will be some time before you receive this. I am infinitely in more pain about Mr. Conway, who is in the midst of the storm in a nutshell, and I know will defend himself as if he was in the strongest fortification in Flanders—and, which is as bad, I believe the court would sacrifice the island⁸ to sacrifice him. They played that infamous game last year on Keppel, when ten thousand times more was at stake. They look at the biggest objects through the diminishing end of every telescope; and, the higher they who look, the more malignant and mean the eye.

I send you *The Mysterious Mother*, and a pair of bootkins; you shall have large supplies if they prove of service—yet I would not have you even try them, unless attacked in your head or stomach. You can never have much gout in your limbs, as it attacks you so late, and little fits will prolong your life. You must put them on at night and tie them as tight as you can bear, the flannel next to your flesh, the oilskin over. In the morning before you rise,

⁸ Jersey.

you must dry your feet with a hot napkin, and put on a pair of warm stockings fresh aired ; over the bootikins at night, a pair of thread stockings.

The Duchess-Dowager of Ancaster, Lady Elizabeth Burrell, and the new Duke and Duchess, have all written to Lady Horatia, acknowledging that the late Duke was to have married her. The two first have expressed themselves in the tenderest manner ; the others wrote only for form. The mother Duchess approves of my niece going into mourning, which she does for six months. The poor young man, his father's absurd will not standing good, made a new and most rational one four years ago, in which he gives the seat of the family⁹ and 5,000*l.* to the present Duke and to the title, and adds 1,800*l.* a year to his mother's jointure. Such symptoms of sense and feeling double the loss.

Adieu ! my dear Sir. In what manner we are to be undone, I do not guess ; but I see no way by which we can escape happily out of this crisis—I mean, preserving the country and recovering the constitution. I thought for four years that calamity would bring us to our senses : but alas ! we have none left to be brought to. We shall now suffer a great deal, submit at last to a humiliating peace, and people will be content.—So adieu, England ! it will be more or less a province or kind of province to France, and its viceroy will be, in what does not concern France, its despot—and will be content too ! I shall not pity the country : I shall feel only for those who grieve with me at its abject state ; or for posterity, if they do not, like other degraded nations, grow callously reconciled to their ignominy.

⁹ Grimsthorpe, in Lincolnshire.

1957. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Saturday night, July 10, 1779.

I COULD not thank your Ladyship before the post went out to-day, as I was getting into my chaise to go and dine at Carshalton with my cousin Thomas Walpole when I received your kind inquiry about my eye. It is quite well again, and I hope the next attack of the gout will be anywhere rather than in that quarter.

I did not expect Mr. Conway would think of returning just now. As you have lost both Mrs. Damer and Lady William Campbell, I do not see why your Ladyship should not go to Goodwood.

The Baroness's¹ increasing pœvishness does not surprise me. When people will not weed their own minds, they are apt to be overrun with nettles. She knows nothing of politics, and no wonder talks nonsense about them. It is silly to wish three nations had but one neck; but it is ten times more absurd to act as if it was so, which the government has done;—ay, and forgetting too, that it has not a scimitar large enough to sever that neck, which they have in effect made *one*. It is past the time, Madam, of making conjectures. How can one guess whither France and Spain will direct a blow that is in their option? I am rather inclined to think that they will have patience to ruin us in detail. Hitherto France and America have carried their points by that manœuvre. Should there be an engagement at sea, and the French and Spanish fleets, by their great superiority, have the advantage, one knows not what might happen. Yet, though there are such large preparations making on the French coast, I do not much expect a serious invasion, as they are sure they can do us more damage by

LETTER 1957.—¹ Probably Lady Greenwich.

a variety of other attacks, where we can make little resistance. Gibraltar and Jamaica can but be the immediate objects of Spain. Ireland is much worse guarded than this island :—nay, we must be undone by our expense, should the summer pass without any attempt. My cousin thinks they will try to destroy Portsmouth and Plymouth—but I have seen nothing in the present French ministry that looks like bold enterprise. We are much more adventurous, that set everything to the hazard ; but there are such numbers of *baronesses* that both talk and act with passion, that one would think the nation had lost its senses.

Everything has miscarried that has been undertaken, and the worse we succeed, the more is risked ;—yet the nation is not angry ! How can one conjecture during such a delirium ? I sometimes almost think I must be in the wrong to be of so contrary an opinion to most men—yet, when every misfortune that has happened had been foretold by a few, why should I not think I have been in the right ? Has not almost every single event that has been announced as prosperous proved a gross falsehood, and often a silly one ? Are we not at this moment assured that Washington cannot possibly amass an army of above 8,000 men ! and yet Clinton, with 20,000 men, and with the hearts, as we are told, too, of three parts of the colonies, dares not show his teeth without the walls of New York ? Can I be in the wrong in not believing what is so contradictory to my senses ? We could not conquer America when it stood alone ; then France supported it, and we did not mend the matter. To make it still easier, we have driven Spain into the alliance. Is this wisdom ? Would it be presumption, even if one were single, to think that we must have the worst in such a contest ? Shall I be like the mob, and expect to conquer France and Spain, and then thunder

upon America? Nay, but the higher mob do not expect such success. They would not be so angry at the house of Bourbon, if not morally certain that those kings destroy all our passionate desire and expectation of conquering America. We bullied, and threatened, and begged, and nothing would do. Yet independence was still the word. Now we rail at the two monarchs—and when they have banged us, we shall sue to them as humbly as we did to the Congress. All this my senses, such as they are, tell me has been and will be the case. What is worse, all Europe is of the same opinion; and though forty thousand *baronesses* may be ever so angry, I venture to prophesy that we shall make but a very foolish figure whenever we are so lucky as to obtain a peace; and posterity, that may have prejudices of its own, will still take the liberty to pronounce that its ancestors were a woful set of politicians from the year 1774 to—I wish I knew when.

If I might advise, I would recommend Mr. Burrell to command the fleet in the room of Sir Charles Hardy. The fortune of the Burrells is powerful enough to baffle calculation. Good night, Madam!

P.S. I have not written to Mr. Conway since this day sevensnight, not having a teaspoonful of news to send him. I will beg your Ladyship to tell him so.

1958. TO THE REV. WILLIAM COLE.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1779.

I AM concerned, dear Sir, that you gave yourself the trouble of transcribing the catalogue and prices, which I received last night, and for which I am exceedingly obliged to you.

Partial as I am to the pictures at Houghton, I confess

I think them much overvalued. My father's whole collection, of which alone he had preserved the prices, cost but forty thousand pounds; and after his death there were three sales of pictures, among which were all the whole-lengths of Vandyck but three, which had been sent to Houghton, but not fitting any of the spaces left, came back to town. Few of the rest sold were very fine: but no doubt Sir Robert had paid as dear for many of them; as purchasers are not perfect connoisseurs at first.

Many of the valuations are not only exorbitant, but injudicious. They who made the estimate seem to have considered the rarity of the hands more than the excellence. Three, 'the Magi Offering,' by Carlo Maratti, as it is called, and two, supposed Paul Veroneses, are very indifferent copies, yet all are roundly valued, and the first ridiculously. I do not doubt of another picture in the collection but 'the Last Supper,' by Raphael, and yet *that* is set down at 500*l*. I miss three pictures, at least that are not set down, the Sir Thomas Wharton, the Laud, and Gibbons¹. The first is most capital. Yes, I recollect, I have had some doubts on the Laud, though the University of Oxford once offered 400*l*. for it—and if Queen Henrietta is by Vandyck, it is a very indifferent one. The affixing a higher value to the Pietro Cortona than to the octagon Guido² is most absurd—I have often gazed on the latter, and preferred it even to the 'Doctors'³. In short, the appraisers were determined to consider what the Czarina *could* give, rather than what the pictures were really worth—I am glad she seems to think so, for I hear no more of the sale—it is not very wise in me still to concern myself, and at my age, about what I have so little interest in—it is still less wise to be

LETTER 1958.—¹ The portraits of Wharton and Laud by Vandyck, and that of Grinling Gibbons by Sir Godfrey Kneller.

² 'The Adoration of the Shepherds.'

³ 'The Doctors of the Church,' by Guido.

anxious on trifles, when one's country is sinking. I do not know which is most mad, my nephew or our ministers—both the one and the others increase my veneration for the founder of Houghton!

I will not rob you of the prints you mention, dear Sir. One of them, at least, I know Mr. Pennant gave me. I do not admire him for his punctiliousness with you. Pray tell me the name of your glass-painter: I do not think I shall want him, but it is not impossible. Mr. Essex agreed with me, that Jarvis's windows for Oxford, after Sir Joshua Reynolds, will not succeed. Most of his colours are opaque, and their great beauty depending on a spot of light for sun or moon, is an imposition. When his paintings are exhibited at Charing Cross, all the rest of the room is darkened to relieve them. That cannot be done at New College; or if done, the chapel would be too dark. If there is other light, the effect will be lost.

This sultry weather, I hope, will quite restore you. People need not go to Lisbon and Naples, if we continue to have such summers.

Yours most sincerely,

H. WALPOLE.

1959. TO THE COUNTESS OF UPPER OSSORY.

Arlington Street, July 14, 1779.

To show your Ladyship that I do not always wait for provocatives, I begin a letter to-night, without well knowing what it is to contain. I came to town this morning about my house in Berkeley Square, of which at last I begin to have hopes, though I am in Chancery for it; but it is by a mode of my own. I have persisted in complimenting and flattering my parties, till by dint of complaisance and respect I have brought them to pique themselves on equal

attentions ; so that instead of a law-suit it has more the air of a treaty between two little German princes who are mimicking their betters only to display their titular dignities. His Serene Highness, Colonel Bisshopp, is the most obsequious and devoted servant of my Serenity the Landgrave of Strawberry.

His Royal Highness of Sion¹, who is Lord Paramount of Strawberry, has acquainted the College of Electors of Westminster that they are to be invaded by the French forthwith, and has subscribed 2,000*l.* for the defence of his Palatinate. Governor Johnstone is said to be gone to destroy the embarkation : I hope he will do it as completely as he has demolished his own character. The town does not seem to be much alarmed, and the courageous stocks don't value it a fraction ; so it does not become us poor little princes to be more frightened than our superiors.

I met Miss Wrottesley this evening at my niece Cholmondeley's, and she told me Mr. Dunning has found a flaw in the settlements, and that they must be drawn again.

Are not you sorry, Madam, for the poor Duke of Ancaster, especially since he made so noble and sensible a will ? I think his attention to his mother must half kill her. I hear he has left a legacy to a very small man that was always his companion, and whom, when he was drunk, he used to fling at the heads of the company, as others fling a bottle. Lord Bolingbroke, I suppose you know, is not dead.

Lady Jane Scott, to whom I made your Ladyship's compliments, has found in a cabinet at Ham a most enchanting picture in enamel by Zincke, of the Duchess of Queensberry, which the Duke always carried in his pocket. It is as simple as my Cowley, in white with the hair all flowing,

LETTER 1959. — ¹ The Duke of Northumberland, Lord Lieutenant of Middlesex.

and beautiful as the Hours in Guido's 'Aurora,' and very like her to the last moment.

I dined on Saturday with my cousin, T. Walpole, at Carshalton, where, though so near London, I never was in my life. It is as rural a village as if in Northumberland, much watered with the clearest streams and buried in ancient trees of Scawen's Park, and the neighbouring Beddington.

I had long wished to see the latter, the seat of one of my ancestors, Sir Nicholas Carew, whose head, as he was Master of the Horse and Knight of the Garter, flew off in one of the moods of Henry VIII. Madam Bess, I think, often visited his son² there. It is an ugly place, with no prospect, a large very bad house, but it was burnt, rebuilt wretchedly after the Restoration, and never finished. Nothing remains of the ancient fabric but a brave old hall, with a pendent roof, copied by Wolsey at Hampton Court, a vast shield of arms and quarterings over the chimney, and two clumsy brazen andirons, which they told us had served Queen Elizabeth in the Tower, but look more as if they had served her for cannon to defend it. There is an almost effaced picture of Sir Nicholas, that seems to have been painted by Holbein, and for which, perished as it is, I longed.

I shall terminate this letter of scraps and nothings with a good epigram, which Mr. Jerningham gave me t'other day :

*Ce Marmontel si lent, si long, si lourd,
Qui ne parle pas, mais qui beugle,
Juge la peinture en aveugle,
Et la musique comme un sourd.
Ce pedant à si sotte mine,
Et de ridicules bardé,
Dit qu'il a le secret des beaux vers de Racine —
Jamais secret ne fut si bien gardé.*

² Sir Francis Carew, Knight. Queen Elizabeth visited him at Beddington Manor in August 1599.

The first line put me in mind of an excellent satiric epitaph on the General Lord Cadogan³, of which I have forgotten all but the last couplet,—

Ungrateful to th' ungrateful man he grew by,
A bad, bold, blustering, bloody, blundering booby.

They were Bishop Atterbury's, who was glad to kill the Duke of Marlborough with the same stone.

1960. TO THE COUNTESS OF AILESBUURY.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, 1779.

I AM not at all surprised, my dear Madam, at the intrepidity of Mrs. Damer¹; she always was the heroic daughter of a hero. Her sense and coolness never forsake her. I, who am not so firm, shuddered at your Ladyship's account. Now that she has stood fire for four hours, I hope she will give as clear proofs of her understanding, of which I have as high opinion as of her courage, and not return in any danger.

I am to dine at Ditton² to-morrow, and will certainly talk on the subject you recommend; yet I am far, till I have heard more, from thinking with your Ladyship, that more troops and artillery at Jersey would be desirable. Any considerable quantity of either, especially of the former, cannot be spared at this moment, when so big a cloud hangs over this island, nor would any number avail if the French should be masters at sea. A large garrison would but tempt the French thither, were it but to distress this country; and, what is worse, would encourage Mr. Conway to make an impracticable defence. If he is to remain in a situation

³ William Cadogan (1670-1726), first Earl Cadogan.

LETTER 1960.—Wrongly placed by C. among letters of August 1779. (See *Notes and Queries*, July 7, 1900.)

¹ The packet in which she was

crossing from Dover to Ostend had been captured by a French privateer.

² Thames Ditton, where Lord Hertford had at this time a country house.

so unworthy of him, I confess I had rather he was totally incapable of making any defence. I love him enough not to murmur at his exposing himself where his country and his honour demand him; but I would not have him measure himself in a place untenable against very superior force. My present comfort is, as to him, that France at this moment has a far vaster object. I have good reason to believe the government knows that a great army is ready to embark at St. Maloes, but will not stir till after a sea-fight, which we do not know but may be engaged at this moment. Our fleet is allowed to be the finest ever set forth by this country; but it is inferior in number by seventeen ships to the united squadron of the Bourbons. France, if successful, means to pour in a vast many thousands on us, and has threatened to burn the capital itself. Jersey, my dear Madam, does not enter into a calculation of such magnitude. The moment is singularly awful; yet the vaunts of enemies are rarely executed successfully and ably. Have we trampled America under our foot?

You have too good sense, Madam, to be imposed upon by my arguments, if they are insubstantial. You do know that I have had my terrors for Mr. Conway; but at present they are out of the question, from the insignificance of his island. Do not listen to rumours, nor believe a single one till it has been canvassed over and over. Fear, folly, fifty motives, will coin new reports every hour at such a conjuncture. When one is totally void of credit and power, patience is the only wisdom. I have seen dangers still more imminent. They were dispersed. Nothing happens in proportion to what is meditated. Fortune, whatever fortune is, is more constant than is the common notion. I do not give this as one of my solid arguments, but I have always encouraged myself in being superstitious on the favourable side. I never, like most superstitious people,

believe auguries against my wishes. We have been fortunate in the escape of Mrs. Damer, and in the defeat at Jersey, even before Mr. Conway arrived; and thence I depend on the same future prosperity. From the authority of persons who do not reason on such airy hopes, I am seriously persuaded, that if the fleets engage, the enemy will not gain advantage without deep-felt loss, enough, probably, to dismay their invasion. Coolness may succeed, and then negotiation. Surely, if we can weather the summer, we shall, obstinate as we are against conviction, be compelled, by the want of money, to relinquish our ridiculous pretensions, now proved to be utterly impracticable; for, with an inferior navy at home, can we assert sovereignty over America? It is a contradiction in terms and in fact. It may be hard of digestion to relinquish it, but it is impossible to pursue it. Adieu, my dear Madam! I have not left room for a line more.

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